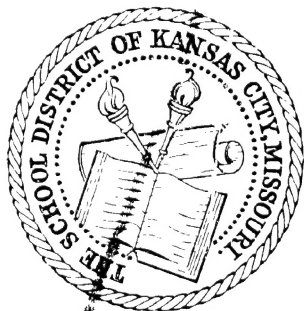


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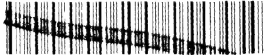
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STANDARD DESK-BOOK SERIES

# A Desk-Book of Idioms and Idiomatic Phrases

IN

## English Speech and Literature

By

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## INTRODUCTION

JUST as the vernacular of a language is termed its *idioms* and *idiomatic phrases*, so its solecisms and other strange locutions are termed its *idiotisms*. A clear understanding of idioms and idiomatic phrases is made necessary by the fact that so much of futile criticism of faulty diction originates in misapprehensions of their nature and functions. Grammarians frequently use the word *idiom* as a synonym of "language" or "dialect," but this is in violation of its etymological signification. *Idiom* is derived from the Greek *ιδίος*, meaning "own, proper to, private." In all its legitimate uses it retains the significance of peculiarity or speciality.

GEORGE P. MARSH in his "Lectures on the English Language" says: "We employ *idiom* in three significations. *First* To denote the general syntactical character which distinguishes the structure of a given language or a family of languages. *Second* To denote an individual expression, a form of speech applicable to a single phrase, which is contrary to the general syntax of the language, but sufficiently intelligible upon its face even to a foreigner. *Third* To denote that class of linguistic anomalies which teachers of languages and dictionaries call phrases or phraseological expressions that contravene all rules, general and special, the purport of which can not be gathered from the meaning of the several members that compose them. To the latter two forms, the name *idiotism* has been sometimes applied."

An *idiom* or *idiomatic phrase* is a phrase the meaning of which can not be deduced from its component parts, as *to bring about*, that is, to accomplish; *to come by*, to get possession of, *to go hard with*, to be painful or injurious to; *to put up with*, to endure, tolerate; *to set about*, to take steps to accomplish, *to let go by the board*, to allow to fall into decay, wreck, or ruin; *to lay aside*, to put by or put away; save up.

An analysis of each one of these phrases shows that the idiomatic meaning is not the result of joining the meanings of the different words that form it, but is a special meaning peculiar to the phrase itself. One has but to compare phrases of this kind with others that are not idiomatic to sense the difference. For example, in each of these phrases *to go up town*, *to go to bed late*, *to get up early*, every word has a meaning that it contributes to the sense of the phrase. However, the idiomatic phrase is to be distinguished from the figurative phrase, in which ordinary connec-

tions or relations are reflected by the words used, but the use is figurative. Examples of these are: *to break the ice*, *to carry coals to Newcastle*, *to ring the changes on*, *to set a trap for*, *to stand in one's own light*. There is not the least doubt that many of our idiomatic phrases originated in figurative speech that passed in simple transition to the idiomatic stage; such, for instance, may be *to carry through*, that is, to achieve, to effect, *to hold forth*, to express one's views, speak in public; *to hold up*, to detain; also, to present to view, *to hold water*, to be logically sound or consistent; *to put down*, to suppress, *to go without*, to deprive oneself.

English speech sparkles with its idiomatic expressions and is rich in figurative phrase. The story is told that when BEN JONSON was presented to a peer, the nobleman, struck with his simple and homely appearance, is said to have exclaimed in surprise: "What! You are Ben Jonson? Why, you look as if you could not say Boh! to a goose." "Boh!" ejaculated the witty dramatist. Be this as it may, we find the proverb used in Swift's lines concerning

"The captain all daubed with gold lace  
Who can hardly tell how *to cry bo to a goose*"

The idiom has not lost its force in our time and is commonly used to express contempt of another's courage. To be *dead as a door-nail* is to be as dead as the knob on which a knocker descends when it strikes—the knob being the "door-nail." As this knob is knocked on the head very frequently, life is assumed to have passed completely out of it. The phrase was used by Dickens in beginning his "Christmas Carol"—"Morley was *dead as a door-nail*—to begin with." But it is of much earlier date, and occurs in Shakespeare, who puts it into the mouth of Jack Cade "Come thou and thy five men, and if I do not leave you all as *dead as a door-nail*, I pray God I may never eat grass more." (II *Henry VI*, act iv, sc. 10.) *To buy a pig in a poke* is to buy something without examining it. The French equivalent is "*Acheter un chat en poche*," to buy a cat in a pocket. The French "*À bon chat bon rat*," translated literally, is "For good cat good rat," but it is an idiom correctly expressed in English by "Tit for tat." When we *let the cat out of the bag*, we reveal something we did not intend to, as the yokel did who tried to sell a cat in a poke for a sucking pig. *To ride the black donkey* is to be obstinate, while to *sell one's ass* is to get rid of one's foolish ways. *To run around Robin Hood's barn* is to go in a roundabout way to attain one's end or achieve one's purpose, and *to chase a rainbow* is to seek the unattainable.

An *idiotism* is a form of expression that exempts particular words from the syntactical rules of the language to which it belongs. The term is applied also to phrases whose meaning is purely arbitrary. *In the twinkling of a bedpost* is one of these, for bedposts do not twinkle. But the phrase, which means "immediately," is explained as referring to a *bedstaff* or pole



used formerly to beat up the bedding, and the "twinkling" to a rapid twist or twirl of the bedstaff by a deft chambermaid. Originally, *bedstaff* was used as is shown by Shadwell in his "Virtuoso": "I'll do it instantly, *in the twinkling of a bedstaff*."

While *idiotisms* are departures from the rules of syntax and the established usage of language, *idioms* constitute the speech peculiar or proper to a people or country. Because an *idiot* was originally a man who lived in retirement in that he took no part in public affairs—a private man unskilled in matters of office as distinguished from one holding public office—the *idiotism* came to mean an individual peculiarity of expression, or what we to-day more usually term an idiosyncrasy.

The *idiom* breathes the breath of life. It reflects the vigor of the people. It is of the people and for the people. Vivid, it defies both grammarian and logician, and like a pixy plays pranks with speech, rejoicing in its freedom from all conventionalities.

An *idiotism*, on the other hand, translated literally into another tongue, forms an incoherent, incomprehensible jumble. *Idiotisms* are not, by any means, confined to one language. They are common in French as in English; in Greek as in Italian; in German as in Spanish. Thus, we have what may be termed Anglicisms, Americanisms, Gallicisms, Teutonisms, and the rest, but all these *-isms* are not *idiotisms*.

Strange as it may seem, *idiotisms* are frequently the most common locutions of a language. For example, "How do you do?" is an *idiotism*, which literally translated into French produces, "Comment faites vous faites?" which retranslated into English may yield, "How make you make?" In the French we have, "Comment vous portez-vous?" which literally translated into English is, "How do you carry yourself?" or "carry you?"

Another Gallicism is "Il y a," which in English may be translated, "He it has," or "He has it," but it really means, "There is." A corresponding Teutonism is "*Es giebt* regen," which in English means, "*It gives* rain," and in French, "*C'a donne* pluie," which when rendered into English means "*That gives* rain." But the true sense is, "It will rain"; in French, "Il pleuvra."

The idiotism *to fall in love* may perhaps be explained as sinking from a level-headed condition to one of amorous delirium. *To pull one's leg* is used variously to mean to get what one can out of another, in other words, "to trim him"; or "to humbug another" or "get the better of him."

When we are "pressed for money" we strive to "raise the wind" to "meet a draft." We speak of a man being "short of breath," of another "painting the town red," of a third who "sat in his shirt sleeves." There are among us always those who, when "money talks," never stop to

criticize its grammar, and so keep "ahead of the game" by "turning down the "dead beat," and are "tickled to death" if they "win out."

There is a class of *idiotisms* already referred to derived from popular legend or proverb. Here are two quoted from Butler's *Hudibras*.

"When folk *fell out*, they knew not why,  
When hard words, jealousies or fears  
*Set men together by the ears.*"

Recently a Japanese student of English asked for an interpretation of the following sentence: "If Mr. Asquith, who *sits* for this constituency, will consent to *stand* again and *run*, he will in all probability have a *walk-over*, and *sit* in Parliament."

The following idiomatic English titles, together with their translations into French, show the height of absurdity which can be attained when one translates them into the French tongue—

<i>Titles of English Masterpieces</i>	<i>French Titles of English Masterpieces</i>
As You Like It	Comme il Vous Plait
Much Ado About Nothing	Beaucoup de Bruit pour Rien
Love's Labor's Lost	Peines d'Amour Perdues
Looking Backward	La Vue par Derrière
Westward Ho!	La Binette de l'Ouest
All in a Garden Fair	À la Belle Jardinière
The Flying Dutchman	Le Boche Volant
The Lights of London	Les Entrailles* de Londres

\* A mistranslation of "lights," which is "lumières."

Modern idiotisms are frequently the result of a desire to express a thought with no other apparent object than to avoid the usual and appropriate terms—a desire to stray from the simplicity and purity of language to create something original. As this brings its author publicity of questionable value, it is a practise that should be discouraged.

The Editors do not claim to have included in the pages that follow all the idioms, idiomatic phrases, and idiotisms in the language. They have, however, drawn freely from all sources available to them, including the FUNK & WAGNALLS NEW STANDARD DICTIONARY and Sir JAMES A. H. MURRAY'S *New English Dictionary on Historic Principles*, and have brought together and explained here the largest number ever collected.

F. H. V.—L. J. DE B.

NEW YORK, April 13, 1923

# A DESK-BOOK OF IDIOMS AND IDIOMATIC PHRASES

## A

**A: not to know a great A or B from a bull's foot or battledore.**

To be illiterate or ignorant.

*I know not an A from the wynd-mylne, ne a B from a hole-foot* DIGBY *Manuscript*.  
*He knoweth not B from a battledore* HOWELL *English Proverbs* 16.

**A 1.** Of the first or highest class: used of shipping to denote the condition of a vessel as to hull and equipment.

By extension, of the highest class of other things and in any respect, as, an A musician, an *A number one* cook: read *A one* or *A number one*.

"He must be a first-rater," said Sam

"A 1," replied Mr Roker.

DICKENS *Pickwick* p 341.

**aback, hold.** To keep in check, restrain; hinder.

**aback, taken.** 1. Caught by a sudden change of wind so as to reverse the sails. 2. Disconcerted, dumfounded.

*I don't think I was ever so taken aback in all my life* DICKENS *American Notes* p 34.

**aback from, stand.** To keep at a distance from; stand aloof; avoid.

**abay, at.** In desperate straits, at a standstill.

**abbot of misrule.** [Eng.] The leader in some medieval festivities as at Christmas. In Scotland, called the **abbot of unreason**.

**a-b-c.** The simplest rudiments or first principles of anything.

Ritualism is only the elementary teaching, the *A-B-C* of religion

FARRAR *St Paul* vol II, ch 36, p 152.

**abide by.** To stand by, adhere to; accept the consequences of; hold to; remain with.

Dare I bid her *abide by* her word?

TENNYSON *Maud* I, xvi, 25

Oldbrough *abided* not only *by* his own measures, but *by* his own instruments

MARIA EDGEWORTH *Patronage* I, xix, 333

**Abolitionist.** [U. S. Pol.] One of a body of persons who sought the abolition of negro slavery, of whom Thomas Jefferson was the first of note.

Many looked upon the *Abolitionists* as monsters CLARKSON *The Slave Trade* II, 21

**abortion.** A product or fruit that is not permitted to come to maturity; hence, anything, as a project or design, that fails before it has matured; also, anything hideous owing to imperfect development.

**abortive.** 1. Brought forth prematurely; hence, imperfectly developed; rudimentary; as, an *abortive* organ or stamen. 2. Coming to naught; failing; as, *abortive* schemes.

An enterprise undertaken without resolution . . . will easily

prove

*abortive*

BARROW *Sermons* vol III, ser 47

**abound in one's own sense.** To act after one's own convictions; rely on one's own judgment.

**about** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases; as, **about East**. [New Eng.] All right, correct — **about face** (*Mil*) A command to turn about so as to face the opposite way — **ready about**; **about ship** (*Naut*). A command to prepare for tacking — **right about** (*Mil*) A command to turn in the direction opposite to that which one is facing — **to about ship** (*Naut*) To change the course by going on the opposite tack — **to be about**. To be up and dressed or attending to one's duties. — **to bring about**. 1. To cause to come to pass, effect. 2. *Naut* Same as to go about, 2 — **to come about**. To turn out, take place, happen — **to go about**. 1. To try to accomplish, prepare, form designs. 2. *Naut* To go on the opposite tack — **to set about**. To begin — **turn and turn about**. One after another, by turns

**above** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases; as, **above all**, in preference to everything else, chiefly — **above ground**. Alive, not buried — **above one's bend**. [Western U S] Beyond one's power — **above one's business** Too proud or self-conceited to attend properly to one's duties usually in a bad sense — **above par**. At a premium, hence, held in high esteem. See **PAR** — **over and above**. Besides, in addition to, as, much remains *over and above*

**above-board**. In open sight, without concealment, fraud, or trickery; above the table board, that is, on the table.

They would have dealt *above-board* and like honest men

BURKE *Speech against Hastings* Works XIII, p. 293.

**Abraham or Abram, to sham**. To feign sickness or madness. In England, an **Abraham man** was a licensed beggar, who lived in the Abraham Ward of Bethlehem Hospital, London, and was permitted to beg on certain days. The *Mad Tom* described by Edgar in Shakespeare's "King Lear" (act II, sc. 3) was an Abraham man.

When Abraham Newland was cashier of the Bank of England, and signed its notes, Dibdin wrote a song which ran

"I've heard people say,  
That sham Abram you may,  
But you mustn't sham Abraham Newland"

JOHN C. HORTON *Slang Dict* s. v

**abreast of or with**. 1. Up to the same plane; equally advanced; so as to keep up with; as, to be *abreast of or with* the times

They must upwaid still, and onwaid, who would keep *abreast of* truth

LOWELL *Present Crisis* st. 18

2. *Naut*. By the side of; abeam of; opposite; over against: said of vessels, or of a vessel and another object; as, the ship was *abreast of* the fort: *of* and *with* often omitted.

**abroad** is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, **to be all abroad**, to be quite out of one's reckoning, hence, to be far from the mark or truth, be puzzled or bewildered — **the schoolmaster is abroad**. Intelligence prevails in the community, also, the people are without instructors — **to get abroad**. 1. To move about, go outdoors. 2. To become publicly known, as a secret

**absolution day**. Good Friday; also, the Tuesday before Easter.

**absquatulate**. To decamp or disappear.

Hope's brightest visions *absquatulate* with their golden promises and leave not a shinplaster behind. Dow's *Sermons* I 247

You'd thank me to *absquatulate*, as the Yankees say I will in a minute

BROUGHTON *Come up as a Flower*

**abstract, in the**. Conceived apart from concrete relations or embodiment; in its general reference or meaning, abstractly.

She has no idea of poverty but *in the abstract* IRVING *Sketch-book, The Wife* p. 32

**abstraction, Platonic**. The mystical self-forgetfulness which leads the philosopher into a region of thought and spirit absolutely above his present condition. R. A. VAUGHAN *Hours with the Mystics* vol. I, p. 19.

**acceptance of persons.** Undue partiality or favoritism toward.

A Sovereign who had sworn that he would do justice, without *acceptance of persons*! MACAULAY *History of England* IV, 580.

**accessory** is used for **accessary** (one concerned in but not the principal; an assistant) in the following phrases. **accessory after the fact.** A person who, knowing a felony to have been committed, receives, relieves, comforts, conceals, or assists the felon — **accessory before the fact.** One who, before the act, instigates, aids, or encourages another to commit a felony, but is not present at its perpetration

**accidental** implies "arising, present from, or due to chance," but has an idiomatic meaning in **accidental color**, color dependent on the condition or peculiarities of the eye and not on the properties of light, as the image of complementary color seen after gazing steadily at any colored object, and then turning aside — **accidental light** (Art) Light coming from some other source than that of the chief light, a cross-light

**accommodation train.** [U. S. Colloq.] A train which stops at all stations. In England, a local.

**according to Hoyle, Gunter, or Cocker.** According to rule or measure; properly; correctly. Hoyle (1672-1769) was an authority on games; Gunter (1581-1626), the inventor of a measuring chain and a gager's slide-rule, and Cocker (1632-1675) was an engraver who wrote an arithmetic that went through 112 editions, and a dictionary.

**account** is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, **in account with**, holding such relation with as requires the keeping of an account — **make account of.** Hold in estimation; esteem — **on account.** To be placed to one's debit or credit, as part of what is due — **on account of.** Because of, by reason of, for the sake of — **on one's account.** For a person's sake, in one's behalf or interest — **square accounts.** Figure up and pay or receive the balance due, come to a settlement — **to give account.** To give an explanation, find the cause of — **to give a good account of.** 1. To obtain success in, or to maintain oneself creditably 2. To succeed personally

Offering that with an army of 60,000 he did not doubt but to give a good account of this Summer's Campaign SCANDERBERG *Redivivus* IV 81

— **to lay one's account with.** To reckon upon, expect, anticipate

We may lay our account with being again involved in war

McCULLOCH *Taxation* III n, 456

— **to take into account.** To consider the presence or effect of, notice, allow for

It is not great men only that have to be taken into account SMILES *Character* I 25.

**accredit with** (something). To attribute (something) to; give credit to as being the author or owner of; as, he is *accredited with* the remark.

**ace.** In military aviation, a super-pilot who in the World War brought down, disabled, or killed five enemy airmen. The German ace of aces was Von Richthofen (killed April 21, 1918), who destroyed 80 air-planes, the French was Fonck, who disposed of 75, the British was William A. Bishop, who brought down 75, the Italian was Major Baracca (killed June 21, 1918), who accounted for 36, and the American was Edward Rickenbacker, who destroyed 26.

**ace of, within an.** Very near to; within a shade of.

I came within an ace of making my fortune WASHINGTON IRVING *Tales of Travel* II 43

**Achilles argument.** The sophism to prove that motion is impossible: originating with Zeno of Elea.

**acid test.** [U. S.] Any process by which the true character of a person is revealed or determined.

**acknowledge the corn.** [U. S.] To admit something as a fact; yield a point at issue.

In 1828, Hon. Andrew Stewart, from Pennsylvania, was in Congress discussing the principle of Protection, and said in the course of his remarks that Ohio, Indiana, and

Kentucky sent their hay-stacks, corn-fields and fodder to New York and Philadelphia for sale. The Hon. Charles A. Wickliffe, from Kentucky jumped up and said "Why, that is absurd, and I call the gentleman to order. We never send hay-stacks or corn-fields to New York or Philadelphia — Well, what do you send?" replied Mr. Stewart — "Why, horses, mules, cattle, hogs — Well, what makes your horses, mules, cattle, hogs? If you feed a hundred dollars' worth of hay to a horse, when you ride off to market with that horse, don't you simply get upon the top of a hay-stack worth a hundred dollars? Same, for your cattle. Now, about your hogs, how much corn does it take to fatten one of them?" — "Why, thirty bushels." — Then you put that thirty bushels of corn into the shape of a hog, and make it walk off to the Eastern market." At this, Mr. Wickliffe jumped up again and said "Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge the corn."

M. SCHELE DE VERE *Americanisms* (1872)

**acknowledgment money.** [Eng.] Money paid to a new landlord at the death of an old one by tenants who wish to admit his rights.

**acquaintance, to be of.** To be familiar or intimate.

**across lots.** [U. S.] Straight across, heedless of obstacles.

I swore in Navvoo, when my enemies were looking me in the face, that I would send them to hell *across lots* if they meddled with me.

BRIGHAM YOUNG, Speech delivered in 1857.

**act of God.** An inevitable event occurring by reason of the operations of nature unmixed with human agency or human negligence.

The term *act of God* generally applies, broadly, to natural accidents, such as those caused by lightning, earthquakes, and tempests. A severe snowstorm, which blocked up railroads, held within the rule. *BOUVIER Law Dict.* Rawle's revision vol. 1, p. 79.

**act on or upon.** 1. To order one's conduct in accordance with; as, to *act upon* a maxim. 2. To exert an influence on, as, alcohol *acts on* the brain.

**act the part, to.** 1. To feign or assume a part; perform as if on the stage; make believe; pretend. 2. To play the part of; take the character of.

He was unskilled to *act a part* and speak half the truth.

BARING-GOULD *Court Royal* xxxv.

He *acted* something like the part of a deserter.

FREEMAN *Norman Conquest* III, xii, 121

**act up to.** 1. To come up to (some belief or ideal) in practise, as, to *act up to* one's creed. 2. To carry out or fulfil, as a promise.

Your Lordship *acts up to* your tenets. *LANDOR Imaginary Conversations* II 99

**Adam.** Depraved human nature; the unregenerate nature of man. Used also as **the offending or the old Adam.**

Consideration like an Angel came,  
And whipt th' *offending Adam* out of him.

SHAKESPEARE *Henry V* act 1, sc. 1

—**not to know from Adam.** To be unacquainted with —**son of Adam.** A man as distinguished from a woman (**daughter of Eve**).

**Adam's ale.** Water; fish broth; *aqua pura*.

We'll drink *Adam's ale*, and we get it pool measure.

HOOD *Drinking Song* IV

**Adam's apple.** The prominence made by the thyroid cartilage of the larynx on the front of the neck, especially prominent in males; fancifully so called from the superstition that a piece of the forbidden fruit stuck in Adam's throat.

Having the noose adjusted and secured by tightening above his *Adam's apple*.

*Daily Telegraph*, London, July 20, 1865

**addict.** One habituated to the use of a stimulant, as alcohol, coffee, tea, or to a drug.

The total number of tea-drinkers in the United States is about 16,000,000, an army of drug addicts whose number is increased annually by the addition of 425,000 new recruits  
*Good Health*, Feb., 1919.

**add in.** To include in a sum or aggregate.

—**add up.** To count up or compute the sum total of (a number of figures), find the sum of.

**addition, division, and silence.** [U S] A Philadelphia corruption of a phrase attributed to Matthew Quay, political boss of Pennsylvania, who, on being asked the proper qualification for a ring or trust is said to have answered—"Multiplication, Division, and Silence," but see the quotations.

In March, 1867, William H. Kemble, treasurer of Pennsylvania, wrote to Titian J. Coffey, a former Pennsylvania politician, then a resident of Washington:

*My dear TITIAN* Allow me to introduce to you my particular friend, Mr. George O. Evans. He has a claim of some magnitude that he wishes you to help him in. Put him through as you would me. He understands *addition, division, and silence*. Yours,  
 W. H. KEMBLE  
*See The Sun*, New York, Sept. 29, 1891.

He [Farmer] credits "Addition, Division and Silence" to Tweed, explaining that it is a Philadelphia phrase and that it should be "Multiplication, Division and Silence!" Of course, every schoolboy knows—if I may borrow from that best of book reviewers, Macaulay—every schoolboy knows that "Addition, Division and Silence" was not spoken by Bill Tweed but written by Matt Quay. But Mr. Farmer is not even a schoolboy, he is still in the kindergarten of linguistics.

BRANDER MATTHEWS in *N. Y. Times Book Review*, Jan. 1, 1922, p. 6.

**addresses, to pay one's.** To court the favor of; especially, to make suit to, court, or woo; as, to *pay one's addresses* to a lady.

**adieu.** [Fr.] Literally, to God; by ellipsis, "I commend you to God."

Used as an expression of kind wishes when bidding farewell to a friend.

**ad infinitum.** [L.] Without end or limit; forever.

The character of their execution varied *ad infinitum*. ADLER *Provençal Poet* III, 48.

**ad interim.** [L.] For the time being, in the meantime, during the interval.

The story of the *ad interim* empress or regent has already in the main been told.  
 SIR E. REED *Japan* I, 123.

**adjective-jerker.** A newspaper writer; penny-a-liner; journalist.

A three-line letter which she sent to the *adjective-jerker* on a society weekly.  
*The Globe Democrat* St. Louis, April 29, 1888.

**ad libitum.** [L.] To one's will or liking; at will, as much as one pleases.

**ad nauseam.** [L.] To sickening excess or the degree of disgust; so as to nauseate, or produce disgust.

**adobe** [Southwest. U. S.] A sun-dried brick; hence, a house of adobe bricks or clay.

**Adullamites.** [Brit. Pol.] Nickname for Liberals, who in 1866 turned Tory because of their displeasure at their own party's measure for extending the franchise.

The little third party were at once christened the *Adullamites* and the name still survives in political history. JUSTIN MCCARTHY *Hist. of Our Own Times* IV, 1, 65.

**ad valorem.** [L.] According or in proportion to the value; as, *ad valorem* duties. Duties imposed by a government on imported commodities are designated as *specific* and *ad valorem*—the former when fixed at a specified amount, the latter when ascertained by a determinate percentage on the value of the goods.

**advantage, to.** In a position where one has superiority, as of condition, knowledge, or place.

True wit is Nature to *advantage* dress'd

POPE *Essay on Criticism* I, 297.

**advantage, to take the.** To avail oneself of (an occasion, opportunity, etc.).

You may see them sometimes, if you happily *take the advantage*

POWER Exp Philos I, 16

**advantage of, to take.** 1. To use (any condition or circumstance) as a means of profit, of progress, or of effecting one's purposes, etc.

Here was material enough for the craft of William to *take advantage of*

FREEMAN Norman Conquest III, xii, 25

2. To get the better of, impose upon; overreach.

**Adventist.** [U S] A religious sect. See MILLERITE

**African golf.** [U S] The ancient, and royal game of hazard played with dice and known as *craps*. So-called because of its popularity with America's colored people.

**after all.** All things considered; on the whole.

The Roman occupation was, *after all*, very superficial

FREEMAN Norman Conquest I, ii, 20

**after one's own heart.** Suiting one perfectly; conforming to one's ideas; to one's taste, as, a man *after one's own heart*.

**afternoon-farmer or man.** A laggard, especially a farmer late in preparing his land, or in sowing or harvesting his crops; hence, one who loses his opportunities.

Beroaldus will have drunkards, *afternoon men*, and such as more than ordinarily delight in drink, to be mad

BURTON Anatomy of Melancholy, Democritus to his Reader 44

**again** occurs in several idiomatic phrases; as, **again and again.** Repeatedly. —**now and again.** At intervals, sometimes —**once and again.** Repeatedly, over and over

**against** occurs in several idiomatic phrases; as, **against the grain,**

**against the hair.** Counter to the natural bent or feelings

If a child has any particular bent, it was given to it, and it's going *against the grain* to try to bend it some other way

HOWELLS Hazard of New Fortunes vol ii, ch 13, p 286

—**against time.** 1. With the intention of coming within a certain time, with the purpose of beating an established record, as, the horse runs *against time* 2. For the purpose of consuming or gaining time, as the senator was talking *against time* —**to run against** 1. To meet accidentally 2. To be an opposing candidate, as for office

**age** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases, as, **age of consent.** [Law.]

1. The age of a woman before which carnal connection, with or without consent, is rape. In Great Britain, such connection with a female under 13 years old is a felony, and with one between 13 and 16 is a misdemeanor. In the United States the age of consent varies in different States from 10 years to 21. *New Encyc Social Reform* p 12 2. The age when one may give legal consent, as to marriage —**age of discretion.** The age, generally 14 years, at which a person may be held amenable to justice for crime, or may designate his own guardian —**age of the moon** [Astro] The time elapsed since the preceding new moon —**Augustan age.** The period covered by the reign of Augustus, the most brilliant age in Roman letters, hence, the corresponding period in other literatures

The reign of Queen Anne was called the *Augustan age*

E. E. HALE Lights of Two Centuries, Pope p 399

—**canonical age.** [Ecc] The age required by the canons for ordination or for the performance of any particular act —**dark ages.** The period in European history beginning with the irruption of barbarian hordes before the fall of the Western Roman Empire (A D 476), extending to the Italian Renaissance (13th century), and characterized by the decay of civilization —**full age.** The age when one reaches the period of independent action and responsibility in personal affairs, majority generally 21 years —**golden age.** 1. A mythical period when perfect innocence, peace, and happiness reigned 2. [Rom Lit] The period (31 B C to A D 14) of the finest



classical writers, hence, in any country, the periods of literature most nearly corresponding to this.

The *golden age* of Arabian learning in the East was attained under the Khalif Al Mamun, who ruled at Baghdad from A. D. 813 to 833.

R. ROUTLEDGE *Pop. Hist. Science* ch. 3, p. 56

But now simplicity's *not* the *age*.

And it's funny to think how cold

The dress they wore in the *Golden Age*

Would seem in the Age of Gold. HENRY S. LEIGH *The Two Ages* st. 4

—*heroic age*. [*Inc. Myth*] The mythical age when heroes and demigods lived on earth.—*lawful age*. Age when one is competent to testify, also, full age, majority.

See the phrase *FULL AGE*, above.—*median age*. The age which marks the exact numerical middle point in the population.—*middle ages*. The period in European history from the downfall of Rome, A. D. 476, to the transition to the modern age, variously reckoned as beginning at the fall of Constantinople and the Eastern Empire (1453), at the invention of printing (about 1450), at the revival of learning, at the discovery of America (1492), or at the crisis of the Reformation (1517 or 1520).—*to come of or to age*. To attain one's majority.

When she *came of age* she was independent.

HUGH CONWAY,

**agog.** A state of eager curiosity; excited with curiosity, interest, or expectation; as, gone quite *agog*; the town was all *agog*.

All *agog* to dash through thick and thin.

COWPER *John Gilpin*

**agony column.** The space devoted by newspapers to personal and private advertisements, originally the second column of the first page of the *London Times*.

There were anonymous appeals to the runaways in *agony columns*.

BLACK *Beautiful Wretch* XXIII

—*to pile up the agony*. To exaggerate, especially in newspaper descriptions of sensational news; hence the theatrical phrase *agony piler*.

Mirbeau has made the one mistake he always makes, that,—in the language of the gallery gods—of *piling up the agony* too much.

*Pall Mall Gazette* April 20, 1903

**agreeable, make oneself.** Endeavor to please, as by entertainment, cordiality, etc.

They *made themselves* too agreeable to the English women.

FREEMAN *Norman Conquest* I, 650

**agreeable rattle.** A man fascinating to women; a lounge lizard or a modern squire of dames.

Roderick Doo appeared to be what the ladies call an *agreeable rattle*.

ALBERT SMITH *Mr. Ledbury* (1842)

**air, in the.** 1. Insecure; unsupported; also, abroad, prevalent; as, the battery is *in the air*; changes are *in the air*.

These expressions and points of view were not peculiar to Philo. They were, so to speak, *in the air*.

F. W. FARRAR *St. Paul* I, 642

2. Without body or foundation in fact; undetermined; visionary; as, the project is all *in the air*. See CASTLES IN THE AIR.

**air-line.** The straightest possible route from one point to another; a bee-line.—*to take the air-line*. To avoid circumlocution in getting to the point of a matter.

**airman.** An aviator. Compare ACE.

The whole tradition of the British Nation, with its great sea history, tends to produce fine *airmen*.

CLAUDE GRAHAM-WHITE *Air Power*

**airs, to give oneself.** To assume affected manners of superiority.

A stuck-up fellow who *gave himself airs*.

KINGSLEY *Water Babies*, 6

**Aladdin's lamp.** A source of wealth, prosperity, or good luck. From the magic lamp of Aladdin in the "Arabian Nights. Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp."

**Aladdin's window, to finish.** To attempt a hopeless task, as that of the Sultan who exhausted his treasure in trying to complete the twenty-fourth window of the palace built by the Genius of the Lamp in the "Arabian Nights." See ALADDIN'S LAMP.

**alcohol, ethyl.** See ETHYL ALCOHOL.

**alert, on the.** On the watch; prepared, as for eventualities; ready.

The men are forever *on the alert* to find out something wrong

*The Nineteenth Century*, No 69, p 736 (1882)

**alive, look.** Make haste; get busy, brace up.

The Squire told the men to *look alive*, and get their job done

HUGHES *Scouring of the White Horse*, p 29

**all occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases; as, to be all abroad.** To be quite out of one's reckoning, hence, to be far from the mark or truth, be puzzled or bewildered

The first deals successfully with nearly the whole of life, while the second is *all abroad* in it

M ARNOLD *Lot and Dogma*, p 224

**—all along.** All the while, or throughout the entire course or period, also, at full length, as one stretched out

I have *all long* declared this to be a Neutral Paper

ADDISON *Spectator* No 463 (1712).

He that foots it best may be sometimes found *all along*, and the neatest person may sometimes slip into a slough

T BROOKS *Works* vi, 441 (1670)

**—all and singular, some, or sundry.** Every one collectively and individually, each and all without exception

Two hours after midnight *all and some*,

Into the hall to wait his word should come

MORRIS *Earthly Par* iii, 478

He invited *all and sundry* to partake freely of the oaten cake and ale HALL CAINE  
**—all dotted up.** See DOTTED UP—**all for each.** Everybody for the one Compare EACH FOR ALL—**All Highest** English of *Alles Hochster* The sobriquet by which the German Emperor, William II, was spoken of throughout the empire prior to his abdication **—all in all.** 1. Everything considered, altogether, absolutely.

Take him for *all in all*

I shall not look upon his like again

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act ii, sc 2

Trust me not at all or *all in all*

TENNYSON *Vivien* 248.

2. (1) Superior to all others, paramount, supreme.

A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,

An intellectual *All-in-all*.

WORDSWORTH *A Poet's Epitaph* st 8

(2) Of chief importance

Dress does make a difference, David

'Tis *all in all*, I think

SHERIDAN *The Rivals* act iii, sc 4.

3. Dearest of all in the affections

They were *all in all* to each other

BYRON *Don Juan* ii, 189

**—all my eye, or all in my eye and Betty Martin.** All nonsense, absurd an expression of doubt or disbelief, attributed to the invocation to St. Martin, patron saint of beggars, "O, mihi, beate Martine" **—all one, or as one.** The same, of no consequence indicating indifference, as, do as you please, it is *all one* to me

It was *all one*. He could not sleep

DE FOE *Robinson Crusoe* 371

What persons are, or are not capable of committing crimes, or, which is *all one*, who are exempted from the censures of the law

BLACKSTONE *Comment* IV, 20.

**—all on one stick.** [U S] In combination

He kept a kind of hotel and grocery store, "*all on one stick*," as we say

N DANA *A Mariner's Sketches*.

**—all out.** Lacking, as of supplies; as, the grocer was *all out* of prunes **—all out doors.**

[U S] The whole country

It takes a mind like Dannel's, fact, ez big ez *all ou'* doors,

To find that it looks like rain, arter it fairly pours

LOWELL *Biglow Papers* 1st Series, No. 9.

Wild turkeys? Oh yes—all out doors was full of them.

PAULDING *American Comedies* p 196  
—all overish. Suffering from a vague sense of discomfort, feeling ill at ease, as if every part of the body were affected with ague apprehensive

When the mob began to gather round, I felt all overish MAYHEW *London Labor* iii, 52

—all possessed. [U. S.] "Like everything" Possibly from "possessed of a spirit" He'd carry on like all possessed—dance, and sing, tell stories, jest as limber and lively as if he'd never hefted a timber

That man is mad What's that? He is *possessed* BEN JONSON *Volpone* act v, sc 6  
—all quiet on or along the Potomac. [U. S.] Tranquillity prevails, there is no cause for alarm a phrase so often repeated in Secretary Stanton's bulletins during the Civil War that it became synonymous with peace and rest Attributed also to Gen. McClellan and to Secretary Cameron

*All's quiet along the Potomac* they say,  
Except now and then a stray picket  
Is shot as he walks on his beat, to and fro,  
By a rifleman hid in the thicket

ETHEL LYNN BEERS *The Picket Guard*,  
—all right. Quite correct and satisfactory When used interrogatively, as "Are you all right?" it is the equivalent of "Is everything well with you?" It is frequently used to give assent or approval In railroading, it is used as a signal to indicate that a train may start This phrase is current in Spanish-speaking America, and gives the name to a popular brand of cigarettes, spelled *abite* to reproduce English pronunciation

—all round or around. Many-sided, versatile, generally capable, adaptable, as an all round sportsman, an all around entertainer

Let our aim be to give an all round education

LOWELL *Harvard Orator* Nov 8, 1886  
—all serene. Unruffled, placid, all right, fine Popular phrase in London during Victorian period

"You're all serene, then Mr Snape," said Charley. TROLLOPE *Three Clerks* XIV  
—all the go. In the fashion, popular, the vogue

Her carte is hung in the West-end shops,  
With her name in full on the white below;  
And all day long there's a big crowd stops  
To look at the lady who's all the go

GEORGE R SIMS *Ballads of Babylon* ("Beauty and the Beast")  
—all there. All that should be; having plenty of brains, vitality, etc.

It was his excusable boast . . . that when anything was wanted he was all there.  
PAYN *Thicker than Water*, XX.

—all the same. Without difference, identically, nevertheless, in spite of; notwithstanding, as, I shall go all the same if it does storm

The captain made us trim the boat, and we got her to lie a little more evenly All the same, we were afraid to breathe

—be on all fours. Correspond or coincide with, be parallel or equivalent to —go on all fours. Walk or creep on hands and feet

alley, or for a white alley, to give one a fair show for an. To afford a chance to recoup losses; to play fair. An alley is a large, choice playing-marble.

Jim, I'll give you a marble. I'll give you a white alley White alley, Jim. And it's a bully taw

allot. [U. S.] To reckon; allow; calculate; hence allotment, allowance made to dependents of soldiers or sailors by the military authorities.

And I allot we must economize or we'll be ruined HALIBURTON *Clockmaker* 93

allow. [U. S.] To admit; to be of the opinion that.

We allow it was merit for Mr. Jefferson not to hinder it.

Massachusetts Spy, Nov 11, 1801.  
alma mater. [L.] A title given by the Romans to Ceres, Cybele, and other goddesses. Literally, fostering, nourishing mother; bountiful mother: applied especially in modern times to the college or other institution of learning where one has been educated and, it is claimed, first to Cambridge University, England.

Till Isis' elders reel

And *Alma Mater* lye dissolv'd in port POPE *Dunciad* iii 338

**almighty dollar.** Money: a phrase used by Washington Irving (and perhaps based on Ben Jonson's "Almightie gold") first in his *Creole Village* (1837), the inhabitants of which felt a contempt for "the almighty dollar."

"The author, therefore, owes it to his orthodoxy to declare that no irreverence was intended, even to the dollar itself,—which he is aware," writes Irving, "is daily becoming more and more an object of worship."

The *almighty dollar*, that great object of universal devotion throughout the land  
IRVING *Wolfert's Roost* p 40

The *Almighty Dollar* is the only object of worship

*Public Ledger* Philadelphia, Dec 2, 1836

**aloft, to go.** To go heavenward; hence, to die, "go west"

For though his body's under hatches,

His soul has gone aloft

DIBDIN *Tom Bowling*

**alone, to go it or play it.** To act independently; play without the assistance of one's partner, as at cards.

**along.** By reason, on account; because: used in the prepositional phrase **along of** (formerly **along on**), and sometimes shortened to **long**.

Oh, she was naught, and long of her it was

That we meet heere so strangely

SHAKESPEARE *Cymbeline* act v, sc 5, l 271

Thanks to Pitt it is *along of* him that we not only keep our boroughs but get peerages into the bargain

Curses on Pitt it is *a'long of* him that the free constitution of this country is destroyed  
TOOKE *The Diversions of Purley* pt I, ch ix, p 234

**alpha and omega.** The first and the last; the beginning and the end, the sum total of anything: from the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet

I am *Alpha and Omega*, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord *Revelation* i, 8

The *alpha and omega* of science *HERSCHEL Studies in Natural Philos* 114

**Alsatia.** Whitefriars, London, a district once the site of a Carmelite Monastery, and possessing privileges of sanctuary for debtors and law-breakers which were so abused that in 1697 they were abolished. See Emma Robinson's "Whitefriars," a novel

A squire of *Alsatia* A spendthrift or sharper, inhabiting places formerly privileged from arrest  
GROSE *Prov Glossary*

**also ran.** [U S] An unsuccessful aspirant in any line; failure: from horses that have failed to finish first, second, or third in a race, and are among those which *also ran*.

**alt, to be in.** To be on one's dignity; in a haughty mood

Your ladyship's absolutely *in alt* Yes, *in alt* give me leave to tell your ladyship that you have raised your voice a full octave higher

COLEMAN *Mus Lady* I

"Come, prithee be a little less *in alt*," cried Lionel, "and answer a man when he speaks to you"

MADAME D'ARBLAY *Camilla* ii, 5

**altar, to lead a woman to the.** To make a woman one's wife; marry.

**alter ego.** Another self; one's so-called "second self"; a double; hence, one's other self; a confidential friend

**altogether, an.** An entirety; a whole

American fingers import a finish and *an altogether* (this is much better than to steal a tout ensemble from the wicked emperor)

*Pall Mall Gazette* June 26, 1865

—**in the altogether.** In the nude phrase of the studio made popular by Du Maurier's *Trilby*

Will the next fad be photographs of modern woman taken in the *altogether*? Society women now have their busts done in marble, their hands and arms in bronze, and their legs photographed

*The New York Mercury*, Sept. 27, 1895

**amalgam.** In the World War (1914-18), a section on the battle-front where Allied forces were combined, or fought side by side, for the common cause.

The *amalgamation* or union of the American, Belgian, British, and French troops on the Western front was remarkable for its spirit of good-fellowship or camaraderie

**Amen Corner.** 1. A meeting place of politicians where party affairs were discussed. Specifically, the place in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, 23d Street, New York City (now replaced by an office building), where the Republican party leader met his associates.

2. In early Methodism, seats near and usually to the right of the pulpit. 3. In London, the end of Paternoster Row where formerly, on Corpus Christi Day (the first Thursday after Trinity Sunday), the monks finished their *Pater Noster* while proceeding to St. Paul's Cathedral

**amende honorable.** [F] A reparation or recantation publicly or openly made to an injured person. It formerly consisted of a public avowal of guilt, and was inflicted on traitors, forgers, and fraudulent bankrupts, the **simple amende honorable** was made before the judges in court, the **amende honorable in figuris** was made in the public square, before the populace, the guilty person being robed in white, with bare feet and head and bearing a lighted candle in his hand and an inscription on his breast. The word is used in the Roman Catholic Church to denote prayers of reparation for sacrilege

*Amende honorable*, in France, was a degrading punishment inflicted on traitors

who were brought into court with a rope around their necks, and made to beg pardon

BREWER *Dict. Phrase and Fable*

She was condemned to make the *amende honorable*, that is to confess her delinquency

AGNES STRICKLAND *Lives of the Queens of Eng.*, Henrietta Maria

**America first.** First in glory and in place. President Wilson's motto.

Our whole duty for the present, at any rate, is summed up in this motto. *America first*. Let us think of America before we think of Europe

WOODROW WILSON *Speech*, New York, April 20, 1915

**Americanize.** To instil the spirit of American ideals into; imbue with American ideas, especially those of liberty, democracy, and equality.

I do not think you can do better than to fix here for a while, till you can become again *Americanized*, and understand the map of the country

JEFFERSON *Letter to Barlow*, May 3, 1802

**Amerind.** An American aborigine, a telescope word formed from *American* and *Indian*.

**amiss, all is.** Out of order; not according to proper or working condition.

My flocks feed not, My ewes breed not,

My rams speed not, *All is amiss*

SHAKESPEARE *The Passionate Pilgrim* st. 18

—**to be not amiss.** [Colloq.] To be suitable, not so bad, passable, or pretty fair, to do expressive of unemphatic approval

—**to take amiss.** To be offended because of, to misinterpret a motive

My brother was passionate, and had often beaten me, which I took extremely *amiss*

BENJ. FRANKLIN *Autobiography* p. 30

**among those present.** [U. S.] Persons invited to an entertainment who do not take a conspicuous part in it. See ALSO *RAN*.

**amook or amuck, to run.** To make indiscriminate attack; fall foul of; talk or write heedlessly; act without regard of the consequences: a phrase derived from the Malays, who when in a state of murderous

frenzy make indiscriminate attacks, wounding or killing all the persons they meet.

Satire's my weapon, but I'm too discreet  
To run amuck, and tilt at all I meet.

POPE *Imitations of Horace* bk ii, Sat I, 69

**amour propre.** [F.] Self-respect; self-love; self esteem; vanity.

To wound one's *amour propre* is—to wound his vanity

BREWER *Dict Phrase and Fable*

A proof of power which cannot fail agreeably to excite the *amour propre*

SPENCER *Psychol* I, IV, viii, 487

**Amy Dardin.** A claimant against the United States Government, whose name became a synonym for legal procrastination.

He and *Amy Dardin's* horse alike have run their race, and their claims have survived them

JAMES K PAULDING *Letters from the South* i, 190

Better than hanging on like *Amy Dardin* for fifty years, and then get pay for a horse pressed during the Revolution.

COL CROCKETT'S *Tour*, p 114

**anaconda.** A nickname for Gen McClellan's army, which was to crush the Southern Confederacy in its ample but non-venomous embrace.

How ridiculous was the *anaconda* theory of crushing the rebellion

*Yale Lit Mag* xxviii, 63

**Ananias Club.** [U. S. Pol.] A fictitious organization of individuals with whom Col. Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919) differed on questions of veracity.

**anchor, to be one's sheet.** To be one's dependence in adversity; also, to be one's last hope.—**the anchor comes home.** The undertaking has proved a failure.—**to weigh anchor.** To resume work on an undertaking that has been delayed or impeded.

**and all that.** And everything else that follows: used after an enumeration to express "and the rest of it"

Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,  
With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that

POPE *Rape of the Lock* iii, 17

**Andrew.** A merchantship. Perhaps so called from *Andrew Doria*, a Genoese admiral.

I should think of shallows and of flats

And see my wealthy *Andrew* docked in sand

SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice* act i, sc 1

**angel.** 1. A person possessing the qualities commonly attributed to angels; especially a bright, beautiful, gracious, kindly, unselfish, and innocent woman. 2. *Theat.* One who finances a theatrical production.

(1) Sir, as I have a soul, she is an *angel* SHAKESPEARE *Henry VIII*, act iv, sc 1

—**Angel of the Schools.** St Thomas Aquinas, otherwise the *Angelic Doctor*. So called because of his scholastic labors and his dissertations on the nature and being of angels —**angel on horseback.** A savory, an entrée

*Angels on horseback*,—those delicious little morsels of oysters rolled in bacon, and served on crisp toast, very hot

GRAND *Babs the Impossible* xv

—**like angels' visits.** Visits noted for the pleasure they give but occurring with rarity

*Angel visits*, few and far between

CAMPBELL *Pleasures of Hope* II, 386

—to entertain an *angel unawares*. To be hospitable to a guest whose merits are unknown, as when Abraham received two angelic visitors in Sodom See *Genesis* xix, 1

Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained *angels unawares*

Hebrews xiii, 2

**angle with a silver hook.** Buy one's fish at a market.

**animal spirits.** Physical vigor; liveliness; exuberance of healthful vivacity; natural buoyancy of spirits; animation; cheerfulness.

*Animal spirits* constitute the power of the present, and their feats are like the structure of a pyramid  
**animated dominoes, ivories, or bones.** [U. S. Army.] Dice.  
 EMERSON *Society and Solitude*

However, for real harmony, the sort that is divine,  
 I'll take the *animated dominoes*

STEWART M. EMERY *I'll Say it's Music*, in *American Legion Weekly* Sept. 24, 1920  
**anon.** Originally, in one (direction); straight on; straightway. Hence (1) Straight away; at once; immediately. (2) In a short time; soon; by and by; not now; at some other time.

Two *anons* and a by-and-by is an hour-and-a-half

JOHN RAY *English Proverbs*

*Anon.* is used also as an abbreviation of *anonymous*, and is not to be mistaken for a man's name.

**another, you are.** You are of the same kind. a reply to any term of abuse; a *tu quoque* used as in an answer to an accusation.

I did not mean to abuse the cloth, I only said your conclusion was a non sequitur  
 "You're another," cries the sergeant, "an' you come to that, no more a sequitur than yourself"

FIELDING *Tom Jones* IX, vi

"Sir," said Mr. Tupman, "you're a fellow" "Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, "you're another"

DICKENS *Pickwick* XV

**answer the bell or the door.** To go to see why the bell was rung, or to open the door to see who rang or knocked; that is, to move in consequence of or as a result of something.

The woman had left us to *answer the bell*

WILKIE COLLINS *Armada* III, 205

**ante or ante up, to.** [U. S.] To deposit the preliminary stake of the "eldest hand," or player to the dealer's left, in poker, and hence called the "age" Until the *ante* is up, cards can not be dealt. Hence pay for admission.

If you can not be a captain or a famous baseball nine,  
 You can *ante up* your fifty cents and at the players whine.

The *New York Mercury* July 21, 1888

**antifogmatic.** [U. S.] A bracer, as of rum or whisky; grog; an eye-opener.

The great utility of rum has given it the medical name of an *Antifogmatic* The quantity taken every morning is in exact proportion to the thickness of the fog

*Massachusetts Spy* Nov. 12, 1789

**anvil, on the.** Under deliberation; being considered; on the stocks; in preparation; in hand. See IRONS.

You know, brother, I have other irons *on the anvil*

CHAPMAN *Widow's Tears* ii, 1

**anvil chorus.** [U. S.] A group of persons noisily objecting to or protesting against any person or thing. To malign or abuse is to *join the anvil chorus*.

**anxious seat or bench, on the.** In suspense; full of anxiety, as one at a revival meeting, seated on the bench assigned to persons who signify their anxiety for salvation. Called the "mourners' bench" at camp-meetings, and usually situated directly in front of the pulpit or platform.

You can tell them to go to the *anxious seat* to get forgiveness

BRIGHAM YOUNG *Journal of Discourses* I, 240

**anyhow.** However that may be; at all events; in any case; no matter what; as, "*Anyhow*, she did not reach home till dawn"; "I don't believe him, *anyhow*."

**anything, as or like.** Exceedingly; to a great extent; very much.

I fear your girl will grow as proud as *anything*

RICHARDSON *Pamela* II, 57

They wept like *anything* to see such quantities of sand

CARROLL *Through the Looking Glass* iv, 73.

**anything, if.** If there be any difference, if at all, if to any degree, as,  
"If *anything*, she is a little calmer to-day."

**anythingarian.** One who does not profess to any creed or who has no positive belief; an indifferentist.

What religion is he of? Why, he is an *Anythingarian*.

SWIFT *Polite Conversation* Dialog 1

**any ways.** 1. In any manner.

We commend to thy fatherly goodness all those who are *any ways* afflicted or distressed

*Book of Common Prayer, Prayer for All Conditions of Men*

2. In any event; on any account; at any rate.

**anywise.** To any degree; in any manner.

**Anzac.** A member of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps; a telescope-word first used at Gallipoli in referring to the Australasian Expeditionary Forces that took a brilliant and conspicuous part on many fronts in the World War, 1914-1918

The beach where the first precarious foothold on Gallipoli was secured by the British was named *Anzac Cove*

*The Literary Digest* Sept. 23, 1916

**ape in one's hood, to put an.** To make a fool of; play a trick on; impose upon; dupe; from the former custom of carrying monkeys or apes on the shoulders, introduced by court fools

**apes in hell, to lead.** The dreaded employment of old maids in the next world.

'Tis an old proverb, and you know it well,

That women dying maids *lead apes in hell*

*London Prodigal* I, 2

I must dance barefoot on her wedding day,

And for your love to her, *lead apes in hell*

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act II, sc. 1

**appeal to the country.** [Brit.] To ascertain the will of the entire electorate by means of a general election following the dissolution of Parliament, through lack of confidence in the ministry or in the event of some grave national issue: a practise now in desuetude.

Parliament would be dissolved, and an *appeal made to the country*

JUSTIN MCCARTHY *History of Our Own Times*

**appearances, to keep up or save.** To make a brave showing outwardly on conditions that inwardly are distressing; to masquerade, as by assuming false prosperity in the face of adversity

Sacrificing real comfort to the desire of *keeping up appearances*

*The Saturday Review* March 9, 1861

It often happened that a duel was fought to *save appearances*

STEELE *Spectator* No. 97, ¶2

**apple** occurs in several idiomatic phrases, as in **apple jack.** [U.S.] Apple- or cider-brandy, an ardent, potable spirit distilled from fermented apple-juice, but confused by some authorities with hard cider. So called from **apple-john**, an apple that ripens on St. John's Day

I am withered like an old *apple-john*

SHAKESPEARE *Henry IV* act III, sc. 3

—**apple of discord.** A cause of envy and contention, as the golden apple thrown by Eris, the goddess of discord, among the goddesses Juno, Minerva, and Venus, and awarded by Paris to Venus, as the fairest of them, thus causing Juno's wrath

This great and wealthy church constantly formed an *apple of discord*

FREEMAN *Norm Conq.* I, iv, 195

—**apple of Sodom or Dead Sea fruit.** Anything that is fair to the eye but deceptive and worthless when acquired, as the fruit said to grow near the site of Sodom, southeast of the Dead Sea, and described by Josephus as of fair appearance externally, but dissolving when grasped, into smoke and ashes. Anything superficially fair but hollow and disappointing



Those *apples of Sodom* which die between the hand and mouth RAINBOW *Labour*  
Like *Dead Sea fruits*, that tempt the eye,

But turn to ashes on the lips MOORE *Fare-Worshippers* Prolog No 2.  
—**apple of the eye.** One who or that which is much beloved, highly esteemed, or greatly valued, as the pupil of the eye, used as a symbol of that which is cherished as most precious

Keep me as the *apple of the eye*, hide me under the shadow of thy wings PSALM xvii, 8

Poor Richard was to me as an eldest son, the *apple of my eye*. SCOTT *Old Mortality* xx  
—to upset the **apple-cart.** [Git Brit] To cause trouble, get into difficulties, as when a wheel comes off a cart and the contents are spilled

**apple-pie bed.** A bed in which the lower sheet is folded upward from the foot so that a person on getting into bed can not get his legs down: a schoolboys' form of practical joke. So called from an apple-turnover, a piece of pastry in which the crust is folded over so as to enclose the apples.

Some "evil disposed persons" have already visited his room, made his bed into an *apple-pie*, plentifully strewn with brushes and razors

The *Saturday Review* London Nov 3, 1883

**apple-pie order.** Perfect order; precise tidiness from the manner apples are pared, sliced, cored, and placed in a pie before baking.

I am just in the *order* which some folks—though why  
I am sure I can't tell you—would call *apple-pie*

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends* iii, 65

**apples, there's small choice in rotten.** Where everything is corrupt there is little chance for selection

Faith, as you say, *there's small choice in rotten apples*

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew*, act i, sc 1

**April fool.** One who is deceived, as by being sent on a useless errand, or made the subject of a practical joke on All Fools' day, April 1.

That's one of Love's *April fools*, is always upon some errand that's to no purpose CONGREVE *Old Bachelor* act i, sc 4

It will be difficult to make *April fools* of a whole people that can read and write GEN P THOMPSON *Exerc* IV, 518

**April morn, my.** One's wedding day; that is, the day on which one was made a fool in reference to April 1st, and the custom of making fools of one another on that day

**apron string.** One of the strings for fastening an apron about the person: used colloquially and in slight derision as the symbol of a woman's influence; as, **tied to his mother's apron-strings**, that is, completely under the influence of one's mother.

He could not submit to be *tied to the apron strings* even of the best of wives

MACAULAY *Hist of England* II, 649

**apropos. I. a.** Suited to the time, place, or occasion; pertinent; opportune; as, an *apropos* remark.

Men of prodigious reading, who judge ill and seldom say anything *à propos*

MANDEVILLE *Fab Bees* II, 187

**II. adv.** In the proper way; pertinently; appropriately.

The French use them with better skill, and more *à propos*

DRYDEN *Ess Dram Poesy*

**Arab: city, gutter, or street.** A homeless outcast or wanderer in the streets. In the plural, the homeless poor, or the children of the streets

*City Arabs* are like tribes of lawless freebooters, bound by no obligations, and utterly ignorant or utterly regardless of social duties

SHAFTESBURY *Speech in Parliament* June 6, 1848

**Arcades ambo.** [L.] Arcadians both (Verg. *Ecl.* 7, 4). Vergil meant both, as being of Arcadia, skilled in music; but now the use is often ironical for simpletons; blockheads.

They each pull'd different ways with many an oath,  
*Arcades ambo*—id est, blackguards both BYRON *Don Juan* canto iv, st 93

**Arcadian nightingales.** Asses: from their bray. So called by Rabelais.

**Archibald or Archie.** A British anti-aircraft gun.

Then, as suddenly, *Archibald* stopped, and we could see the British machine buzzing across the path of the German H G WELLS *Mr Brulung Sees It Through*

**area of freedom, to extend the.** To spread liberty. A political catch phrase, widely used of Texas prior to the war between the United States and Mexico. See quotation.

Is our aid invoked to relieve [Texas] from a condition of servitude and *extend the area of freedom*? Why, Sir, in the same breath in which we are called upon to *extend the area of freedom*, we are assured that Texas achieved her independence in the battle of San Jacinto

CONGRESSMAN SMITH of Indiana *Speech* House of Representatives, Jan 8, 1845

**are you there?** [Gt. Brit.] A telephone-call used as the equivalent of "Hello!" in the United States.

**Argonauts.** [U. S.] Gold-seekers who prospected California in 1849.

From the *Argonauts* who sailed in the *Argo* from Aea (later Colchis) with Jason to search for the Golden Fleece. Called also **Forty-niners**.

**argosy.** A merchantman. SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice* act i, sc. 3.

**Argus-eyed.** Watchful: from Argus, the giant with a hundred eyes who, according to Greek fable, was set by Juno to watch Io, of whom she was jealous.

**aristocracy, the cold shade of.** The unsympathetic patronage of the aristocrats.

**ark, to have been born in, or come out of the.** To be behind the times.

**Arkansas toothpick.** A bowie-knife, or a large sheath-knife.

All these men could be seen with a Navy six shooter and an *Arkansas toothpick* suspended to a rawhide belt around their waists GREENLEAF *Ten Years in Texas*

**arm** is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **arm in arm.** With the arm of one linked in the arm of another—**give one's arm to.** Help along, give aid to—**have at arm's length.** Have conveniently accessible—**keep at arm's length.** Keep as far away as one can reach with the arm, hence, away from close contact or intimacy—**right arm.** Mainstay, chief support or dependence

Sir Lancelot, my *right arm*, The mightiest of my knights TENNYSON *Guinevere* 426

—**the secular arm.** Civil jurisdiction as opposed to ecclesiastical.—**work at arm's length.** Work awkwardly.

**arms** is used in the following idiomatic phrases:

—**a passage of arms.** An argument or a controversy of a literary character; battle of words—**as long as one's arms.** Very long—in, up in, or in open arms. Ready to fight, prepared for contention, armed, in a hostile attitude.

Jonathan commanded his men to be in arms

Buckingham's Secretary was up in arms

All mankind in open arms against them

—**to appeal to arms.** To determine to settle a dispute by war—**to lay down arms.** To cease fighting, surrender—**to take up arms.** To begin war, also, to take up the cudgels for, that is, to champion the cause of, support, defend—**under arms.** With arms ready for use, as in combat or parade. Enlisted for military service, ready to take the field.

Thus, *under heavy arms*, the Youth of Rome  
Their long laborious marches overcome

VERGIL *Georgics* III, 537. DRYDEN'S trans

—with open arms. With eager welcome or cordial embrace or greeting, heartily, affectionately

*With open arms receiv'd one Poet more*

POPE *Prol.*, Sat 142

**army beef.** Canned beef supplied to an army. See BULLY-BEEF, EM-BALMED BEEF.

**arrière-pensée.** [Fr.] An afterthought; a mental reservation; hidden motive.

No nonsense is so absolutely devoid of *arrière pensée* as that of Edward Lear [author of *A Book of Nonsense*]

*The Spectator* London, Sept 17, 1887, p 1251

**arrow, broad.** The official brand, a representation of an arrow-head with broad barbs, used by the British government on its stores or property. It is the distinguishing mark on a convict's clothing and cap, and as such is a penal badge.

If the *broad arrow* be found on any stores in Confederate hands, it will be found that they were condemned and sold, or that the mark is forged.

*The Times* London, Feb 13, 1865

**art**, as the embodiment of thought in literature, music, painting, sculpture, speech, etc., is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **the dependent arts.** The arts that produce something useful as, architecture, ceramics, decoration, glass-making, gold-smithery, gem-cutting, landscape-gardening, etc. — **the fine arts**, sometimes called **the free arts.** Engraving, painting, music, poetry, prose dramatic literature, sculpture — **the liberal arts.** The study of languages, history, science, philosophy, etc., the higher branches of learning which were so called because the Romans allowed only freemen to follow them — **the useful arts.** Those occupations and trades which are developed chiefly by manual labor, the handicrafts that engage the ingenuity of the artisan.

**art and part.** Complicity in instigating crime (*art*), and *part* in committing it; by extension, concern or interest in.

The law of Scotland makes no distinction between the accessory to any crime (called *art and part*) and the principal

*National Encycl.* 1 105

**artichoke, to eat.** To consume bit by bit; absorb gradually; feed on piecemeal. Compare to EAT CROW.

They have *eaten*, leaf by leaf, a whole *artichoke* of treaties, taking the September Convention for the last mouthful.

E. STRACHEY in *The Daily News* London, Nov 26, 1870

**ash-can.** A colloquial name for a depth bomb resembling a galvanized iron ash-barrel with depressed sides, used in submarine warfare by the British navy.

The depth charge is known in the Navy as the "egg" or the *ash-can*.

SAMUEL G. BLYTHE *Sat Eve Post* Philadelphia, Oct 12, 1918

**aspen leaf.** A tongue; hence, a person who is given to ceaseless chatter.

If they [women] might be suffered to begin ones in disputing, those *aspen leaves* of theirs would never *have* wagging

MORE *Confut Barnes* Works, VIII, 769

**aspersions, to cast.** To calumniate or slander.

I defy all the world to *cast* a just *aspersion* on my character

FIELDING *Tom Jones* II, 209

**ass** is used in the following idioms and idiomatic phrases:—**ass.** An ignorant fellow, a dolt or conceited fool not now in reputable use

I am but an *ass* in the trick of bringing about such a discourse

SCOTT *Fair Maid of Perth* i, 39

You may lead an *ass* to knowledge

But you can not make him think

—*Anon*

—**an ass in a lion's skin.** One who masquerades or pretends to be what he is not, a fool that apes a wise man, a jackdaw in peacock's feathers.

The ill-natured world might call him the *Ass in the Lion's skin*

ADDISON *The Spectator* (1711) No 13, 4

—**all asses wag their ears.** All foolish persons talk as if they were very wise, "the empty vessel makes the greatest sound", those who talk much seldom say anything

of value—**asses' bridge** (*pons asinorum*) [Humorous.] The 5th proposition (some say, incorrectly, the 47th) of the first book of Euclid's *Geometry*, so called from the difficulty of the demonstration to beginners. Hence, an impediment, a difficulty

If this be rightly called the *bridge of asses*,

He's not the fool that sticks, but he that passes *Epigram* (C 1780)

He never crossed the *asses' bridge*

*All the Year Round* London, 1860, p. 560

—**honey is not for the ass's mouth**. Gentle words are wasted on unreasoning anger

—**go sell your ass**. Get rid of your foolish notions

A dull scholar, not apt to learn, is bid to *sell his Asse* to signify his blockishness

TOPSELL *Four-footed Beasts* 21

—**to make an ass of oneself**. To do something that exposes one to ridicule, act stupidly or foolishly

They could not be deprived of the common right of Englishmen to *make asses of themselves* if they like it

*Fraser's Magazine* London, 1866, p. 284, col. 1

—**to wrangle over an ass's shadow**. To quarrel over trifles

**assurance double sure to make**. To take all precautions to achieve one's purpose or attain one's aim.

But yet I'll *make assurance double sure*,

And take a Bond of Fate

SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* act iv, sc. 1

**at all**. In any way; to any degree or extent; in any event whatever; as, he knows nothing *at all* about it; he may not go *at all*.

If he refuses to govern us *at all*, we are not bound to remain without a government

MACAULAY *History of England* II, 557

**at all events**. Under any circumstances or conditions in any case; anyhow.

Berkstead was a pedlar, or *at all events* a hawker of small wares

BUCKLE *Civilization* I, x, 603

**at that**. [U. S.] In addition; as well; even in that respect: an intensive use; as, only a penny—and a bad one *at that*.

She had only two calico dresses and one pair of shoes, half-soled *at that*

ELLA HIGGINSON *Tales from Puget Sound*, p. 33

**atta boy!** [U. S.] A contraction for "that's the boy," which became a popular name for members of the American Expeditionary Force in London, and elsewhere.

"Atta boy" is a simple popular contraction for "That's the boy," which means "here's the man for the situation"

*The Evening Sun* New York July 31, 1917

**Attic bee**. A classic epithet applied to Sophocles and Xenophon in allusion to the sweetness and grace of their writings, and to Plato who was frequently the *Athenian bee* or, in Milton's "Paradise Regained," the *Attic Bird*. (l. 245)

[Milton] a true *Attic bee*, he made boot on every lip where there was a trace of truly classic honey

JAMES RUSSEL LOWELL

—**Attic salt**. Delicate, refined, pointed, classic wit

The high Northern virtue of reticence, which has given strength and delicacy to our literature, finds scant honour among those, and they are the majority of French writers, who prefer the sel gaulois to *Attic salt*

*Quarterly Review* July, 1890, p. 63

**attic story**. The topmost part, hence, the head as the upper story.

**attorney, attorneydom, attorneyism**. One empowered to act for another. See quotations

From an early period the name *attorney* was often used reproachfully as almost equalling "knave or swindler"

JAMES A. H. MURRAY *New English Dict.* vol. I, p. 554

Vile *attorneys*, now a useless race

POPE *Moral Essays*, III, 274

Johnson observed that "he did not care to speak ill of any man behind his back, but he believed the gentleman was an *attorney*"

BOSWELL *Life of Johnson*, I, 385

**au fait**. [F] Literally, to the act or fact, completely familiar; thoroughly conversant, skilled; expert

I will put you *au fait* of all the circumstances of the case.

A GRANVILLE *Autobiog* 286

**Augean stables, to cleanse or purge the.** To clean out, as the stables of Augeas, which contained 3,000 oxen and had not been cleaned for 30 years, but Hercules performed the task in a single day by turning the river Alpheus through them. Hence, to free from defilement; purify; remove abuses, as from an administration, a community, politics, etc.

**Augustan age.** See under AGE.

**Auld Cloutie.** [Scot.] The devil, in allusion to the cloven hoof.

O thou, whatever title suit thee,  
*Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Cloutie*

BURNS *Address to the Devil* 1

**Auld Reekie.** Old Smoky: a sobriquet of Edinburgh.

The wreathing smoke of *Auld Reekie*

MATTHEW ARNOID

**au revoir.** [F.] Till we meet again; good-by for the present: an expression used at parting

**auspices, under the good.** By reason of the personal interest (of), or because of the influence or patronage (of).

The whole has been done *under the auspices* of religion and piety

BURKE *French Revolution*, p. 135

**Aussey, Aussie.** An Australian private in the World War; also, Australia.

C. Hampton Thorpe, a one time digger (soldier), maintains that Australia, as a country, is spelled "*Aussie*" for purposes of abbreviation, but Australian fighting men abroad are termed "*Ausseys*."

*The Baltimore Star*, Nov. 1918

**Australian crawl.** An overhead swimming stroke.

**Automat.** [U. S.] A restaurant in which service is automatic and food, etc., is delivered by coin-in-slot device

**autumn, to come to one's.** To reap the fruits of one's folly; get what one deserves; arrive at the time when one must pay penalty; to ride for a fall.

**Auxiliary.** A member of the Auxiliary Division of the Irish Constabulary charged with the maintenance of peace in Ireland, following the revolt in Dublin, April-May, 1916. Compare BLACK AND TAN

The existing police regime in Ireland, that is the regime established by the *Auxiliaries* (ex-officers in the British Army)

J. M. TUOHY in *The World* New York, June 8, 1921

**available.** [U. S.] That which is capable of being used to one's advantage; said of a person or thing at one's disposal or under one's influence or direction

Occasionally a patriot has been *available* for carrying out the purpose of politicians. But often imbecility and rascality have been found *available*

J. G. HOLLAND *Letters to the Jones*, 278

**Availability** implies "that may be used or be made use of," as a political candidate, or personal popularity

**avuncular relation.** A pawnbroker

Cline had passed the *avuncular* banking-house in the City, without caring to face his relations there

THACKERAY *Newcomes*, xl, p. 481

The poet detaches a blanket from his bed and despatches it to an *avuncular relation*

MARSHALL *Pomes, A Model Christmas* 92

**ax after the helve, to send the.** To spend more money in the hope of recovering what has already been spent or lost; send good money after bad.

**ax on the helve, to fit or put the.** To overcome a difficulty; achieve one's purpose; also, to come to the right conclusion; solve a doubt.

**ax to grind, to have an.** To be moved by personal interests or influenced by desire for revenge, to have a grudge against.

When I see a merchant over-polite to his customers, thinks I, that man has an *axe to grind* C MINER *Who'll Turn Grindstones?*

**ax, to hang up one's.** To give up a hopeless or useless project; also, to withdraw from an undertaking or give up business: in reference to the ancient practise of warriors of hanging up their axes on returning from battle

**awful.** Excessive; also, monstrous, fearful, frightful: used as a general intensive.

Everything that creates surprise is *awful* with them "What an *awful* wind! *awful* hill! *awful* mouth! *awful* nose!" etc

LAMBERT *Travels in Canada and the United States*

**awfully.** Exceedingly; excessively; extremely: a colloquial intensive use in such combinations as *awfully* clever; *awfully* funny, glad, jolly, nice, etc.

**Azrael, to listen for the wings of.** To watch for the approach of death—Azrael being the angel who keeps a vigil over the dying.

Those who *listen* in the watches of the night for the wings of Azrael

SIR WALTER BESANT

## B

**B from a battledore, not to know.** To be ignorant of one's letters; hence, to be unlearned. See A.

**B from a bull's foot, to know.** To be well informed.

**B. and S.** Brandy and soda-water.

**Babel.** A great edifice or lofty structure, as the Tower of Babel; hence, an impractical or visionary plan; "a castle in the air"—a perfect Babel. A thorough confusion, also, "a jangling noise of words", hideous gabble

**babies (or a boy) in the eye, to look or see.** To show or see signs of love; to look amorously, to cast sheep's eyes; to look so closely as to see one's image in another's eye.

She clung about his neck, gave him ten kisses,  
Toyed with his locks, looked babies in his eyes

HEYWOOD *Love's Mistress*

**babes in the wood.** Simple-minded ingenuous folk who are easily imposed upon: from a ballad, in the Percy *Reliques*, of two children who were induced to roam in Wayland Wood, England, and perished there. The term was applied formerly also to persons condemned to the pillory or the stocks.

Yet those *babes* in the wood, Uncle Sam and Aunt Fanny, trusted six months of our existence to his judgment *Harper's Magazine*, September 1887

**baby act, to plead the.** To evade responsibility on the ground of inexperience, as when pleading minority to void a contract—the legal defense of "infancy."

**baby, to kiss.** [U. S.] To take a drink; to "smile"; to wet one's whistle—now in disuse.

**Bacchus has drowned more men than Neptune.** Wine has killed more men than water.

**bachelor's button.** One of various flowers, as the campion or crowfoot —to wear bachelors' buttons. To remain unmarried

**bachelor's wife.** An imaginary wife the ideal of a bachelor's dream.

*The bachelor's wife* occupies a large place in our literature, as the mistress of all the poets whoever wrote on love without actually experiencing it

HUGH MILLER *My Schools and Schoolmasters*, p. 503

**back and forth.** To and fro; there and back.

They would run here and there, *back and forth*, at full speed along the sands

HAMMOND *Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 138

**back, behind one's.** When one is not present.

**back blocks.** [Austral.] Lands in the remote and sparsely settled interior; also, lands shut off from a water-front, as of a river or creek.

We were doomed to see the whole of our river-frontage purchased. The *back blocks* which were left to us were insufficient for the support of our flocks, and water supply

Anonymous *Glimpses of Life in Victoria*, p. 31

In the *back blocks* of New South Wales he had known both hunger and thirst and had suffered from sunstroke

HADDON CHAMBERS *Thumbnailed Sketches of Australian Life*, p. 33

**back country, county, lands.** [U. S.] Interior regions.

I herewith send you a small map of the *back country*

GEO. WASHINGTON *Writings* I, 145. (Ed. 1889).

The appreciation of the *back lands* belonging to the Government

*United States Gazette*, Philadelphia July 15, 1795

It must be one of our candidates from some of the *back countries*

*The Balance* April 30, 1805

**back load.** [U. S.] A burden carried on the back.

**backlog.** [U. S.] A large fire-log placed at the back of a chimney that sometimes burns for days.

A buckeye *backlog* and hickory firestick resting on a stone and irons, with a Johnny cake on a clean ash-board set before it to bake

DRAKE *Pioneer Life in Kentucky*, p. 170

**back, glad to see you.** Pleased to see (one) again: said on a return from a journey or voyage.

**back of, glad to see the.** Contented or happy at being rid of (a person or thing).

**back on, to turn the.** To turn away from a person; go away; forsake; abandon; neglect; also, to leave a person or place.

I never turned my *back* on my leader yet

GEORGE MACDONALD *Annals of a Quiet Neighborhood* xxx, 522

We turn our *backs* on the outskirts of civilization

TRISTRAM MOAB II, 19

**back out.** To draw out (of), withdraw (from); refuse to carry out, as an engagement, to retreat from a difficulty.

Determined that Morris should not *back out* of the scrape so easily

SCOTT *Rob Roy*, viii

Octavius *backs out*. His caution and reserve come to his rescue

MARY C. CLARK *Shakespeare's Characters* ix, p. 226

**back the field, to.** [Sports.] To bet against a particular contestant, or contestants, by wagering that one of the others, termed collectively "the field," will win.

**back, to be or to lie on one's.** To be unable or unwilling to help oneself.

Sick and very feeble, having been for several weeks upon my *back*

CATLIN *North American Indians* II, xlv, 80

They never look up to Heaven till God lays them on their *back*

GURNALL *Christian in Armor*, p. 343

**back, to give or make a.** To keep the back firmly braced so that another may leap over one's head as in leap-frog, or mount up to anything.

The major was *giving a back* to Georgy

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* III, 13

**back, to give one the.** To turn away from; disregard.

They *gave him the back* and became apostates

BISHOP SMYTH *Sermons*

**back to the wall, with one's.** In such a position that one can not be assailed from behind; hence, in a desperate defensive position.

Every position must be held to the last man, there must be no retirement. *With our backs to the wall*, and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end

Field-Marshal SIR DOUGLAS HAIG *Order of the Day* April 12, 1918

**back up, to.** To support; uphold. In sports, to keep in readiness behind or near another player so as to aid in case he fails.

He prolonged Cæsar's command, and *backed him up* in everything

FROUDE *Cæsar* XXI, 359

**back up, to have or set one's.** To be annoyed or angry, as a cat with its back arched when attacked by a dog. Also rendered to **get one's back up.**

But the other great Whig families  
Egremonts

*set up their backs* against this claim of the  
DISRAELI *Sybil* XIV

O Lud! how *her back will be up* then, when she meets me

VANBRUGH & CIBBER *Provoked Husband* act v, sc 3

**backbone, the.** The chief support; the mainstay.

Sober practical men constitute the moral *backbone* of the country

WILLIAM BOOTH *In Darkest England* pt. 1, ch 2, p 17.

**backbone, to the.** Through and through; thoroughly.

[Davy Crockett]—a union man and a nationalist *to the backbone*

THEODORE ROOSEVELT *T H Benton* p 113

**background, in the.** In an inconspicuous place; out of general view, hence, in an inconsequential position.

**back seat, to take a.** [U. S.] To withdraw or sink into obscurity; to admit failure, to place in retirement.

In the work of reconstruction traitors should *take back seats*

ANDREW JOHNSON

**back-stairs influence.** Influence secured by intrigue or underhand methods. The phrase arose from the fact that in royal palaces there were two stairways, one used by persons engaged on affairs of State; the other, by aspirants to favor with private ends in view.

A *back-stair* minister

VANBRUGH *Relapses* act II

A *backstairs influence* and clandestine government

BURKE *Present Discontent*

**back track, to take the.** [U. S.] To take the track that leads one back to the starting place; hence, to back down or out; to retreat.

The first law of preservation has admonished Mr. Douglas that he has *gone as far* in his slavery concessions to the South as he possibly can go, and that he must *take the back track*

*The New York Herald* Dec 26, 1857

**backing and filling.** [U. S.] Shifty; irresolute from the uncertain motion of a steamboat when making a wharf.

There has been too much *backing and filling*, not only upon the Cuban question, but upon every other

*The New York Herald* June 15, 1854

The reader need no longer wonder at the *backing and filling* of the "Iroquois" around the little "Sumter"

SEMMES *Service Afloat* p 255

**bacon, to bring home the.** To carry the spoils home; be successful in an enterprise from an old practise of greasing a pig and letting him loose among blindfolded persons at a country-fair. Whoever caught it and held it "brought home the bacon."



**bacon, to save or sell one's.** To prevent loss or to save oneself from an embarrassing position; to save one's hide.

But as he ran to *save his bacon*,

By hat and wig he was forsaken. COOMBE *Dr Syntax* vi, 240

**bad blood.** A spirit of strife, hostility; hatred. Also rendered **ill blood**.

Used also in the phrase to **breed** or **stir up bad blood**, to awaken a feeling of bitterness or a vindictive spirit in another.

*Bad blood* (was) bred

LAMB *Ella Poor Relation*

Hot words passed, and *ill blood* was plentifully bred

SWIFT *Battle of Books* 232

**bad cess to ye.** [Ir.] Ill luck go with you; may you fare badly; literally, may you have *no success*; may your board and lodgings be bad.

**bad debts.** Debts that one can not recover.

As the price of the article increases, so do *bad debts* increase CRUMP *Banking* xi, 224

**bad egg, penny, hat, lot, etc.** A good-for-naught; ne'er-do-well.

Many of the officials of the convict prison . . . are what the Yankees call *bad eggs*

*Five Years Penal Servitude* 11

Men may be lykne lettered men . . . to a *badde penny*

LANGLAND *Piers Ploughman* C xviii 73

That French chap is a *bad hat*

BOOTHBY *Maker of Nations* 1

A very handsome girl she may be, but a *bad lot*, as her father was

BLACKMORE *Erema*

**bad, to go.** To spoil, turn, decay.

**bad, to go to the.** To fall from the path of uprightness and morality; sink into debauchery; become depraved.

He *went* as the common saying expressively phrases it, *to the bad*

TROLLOPE *Lindsfarne Chase* i, 46

**bad, to the.** Having suffered loss; as, he was \$2,000 *to the bad*.

**Badger State.** Wisconsin: so called, not merely from the badger which constitutes its armorial bearing, but from the lead miners, who bunked and cooked in cavelike homes, or "badger-holes"

A keen-eyed, leather-belted *badger* from the mines of Wisconsin

C. D. HOFFMAN *Winter in the Far West* i, 207

**baggage smasher.** [U. S.] A railway or hotel porter who handles trunks, traveling bags, etc.

[The Boston hackman of the best school] is a wholly different type from the *baggage smasher* of Babel or from the cabman of London

E. E. HALE *Ingham Papers* p 59

**bag and baggage, to clear out.** To leave with all one's belongings: a phrase attributed to William Ewart Gladstone and used by the Conservatives to characterize the Gladstonian policy of *clearing* the Turks *bag and baggage* out of Europe.

**bag of bones.** An ill-fed, emaciated creature.

**bag of tricks, the whole.** All that there is of a matter under consideration.

**bag, to empty the.** To tell all that one knows of a matter.

**baker's dozen.** Thirteen.

These dealers [bucksters] on purchasing this bread from the bakers, were privileged by law to receive thirteen batches for twelve, and this would seem to be the extent of their profits. Hence the expression, still in use "a *baker's dozen*"

RILEY *Liber Albus*, pref 68

—to give one a **baker's dozen.** To give a sound thrashing to, and one blow more

**balance.** Remainder: a misuse regarded as an American colloquialism, but probably of Irish origin.

"The top o' the morning to you, Pat"

"And the *balance* of the day to your Honor"

*Irish Salutations*

He always grows enough to bread his own people for a year at least, and sells the  
*balance* BUCKINGHAM *Slave States* II 167  
**balance of power.** International equilibrium, especially in Europe, sought by the Holy Alliance in 1816, the Dreibund in 1883, and the League of Nations in 1918.

The meaning of the *balance of power* is this that any European state may be restrained from pursuing plans of acquisition, or making preparations looking toward future acquisitions, which are judged to be hazardous to the independence and national existence of its neighbors. WOOLSEY *Introduction to International Law* section 43

The balance of Lutzen, which determined the balance of power between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in Germany. STANLEY *Jewish Church* I xi 204

**balance of trade.** The difference between the money value of a nation's exports and its imports, regarded as favorable if exports exceed imports, and unfavorable if imports exceed exports.

The *Balance of Trade* is to be taken by a strict scrutiny of what proportion the value of the commodities exported out of this kingdom bear, to those imported

CHILD *Discourse of Trade* 164

**bald-headed, to go in.** [U. S.] To engage in, or enter into, prepared for any eventualities, or with decks cleared for action.

I sent which pays best, and then *go into it bald-headed*

LOWELL *Biglow Papers* 6

**ball at one's foot, or before one, to have the.** To be master of a situation; have things under one's control.

We have the ball at our feet, and if the Government will allow us the rebellion will be crushed. AUCKLAND *Correspondence* III, 418

The crisis in George Dallas's life had arrived—the ball was at his feet. EDMUND YATES

**ball before the bound, to take the.** To act prematurely, be in too great haste; to act precipitately.

**ball of fortune.** One who has suffered many vicissitudes of fortune in his career.

Brown had been from infancy a ball for fortune to spurn at

SIR WALTER SCOTT *Guy Mannering* xxi

**ball under the line, to strike the.** To miss one's aim, fail in an undertaking; from the hitting of a ball in tennis in such a way that it goes under instead of over a line (now a net) stretched across the middle of a court.

Thou hast stricken the ball under the line

JOHN HEYWOOD.

**ball up, to.** To make a muddle of; tangle up.

**ball rolling or up, to keep the.** To maintain interest and animation in anything; keep anything going, as a ball on the roll in football; especially, to carry on conversation or social entertainment.

I put in a word now and then to keep the ball up

BENTHAM *Works*, To G. Wilson X, 104.

**ball, to lead up the.** To go first; open the ball. See the next entry.

The moon shone bright Mr Thornhill and my eldest daughter led up the ball to the great delight of the spectators. GOLDSMITH *Vicar of Wakefield* ch ix, p 49

**ball, to open the.** To be the first to dance at a ball, hence, to lead off; take the initiative; begin operations.

Miss Fairfield was the first lady handed out to open the ball

ORDERSON *Creol* VI 63

Waltz and the battle of Austerlitz are said to have opened the ball together

BYRON *Waltz* xiii, note

**ball, to play.** In baseball, to begin a game or to resume it after an interruption; hence, to come to the point; to get busy; to get into action.

**ball, to take up the.** To take one's turn, as in a game; hence, do one's share at an entertainment; also, to keep up interest as in conversation.  
**balls, the three (golden or blue).** The sign of a pawnbroker, originally the arms of the Medici family of Lombardy, the Lombards being widely known as money-lenders.

I've gone to a dance for my supper;

And now I must go to *three balls*

*Hood Pawnshop Watch ix*

**ballast.** Mental, moral, or political stability; steadiness. **To have no ballast** is to be unsteady; **to want ballast** is to lack stability, as of character.

Those that are of solid and sober natures have more of the *ballast* than of the *sail*

*Bacon Vain Glory*

**balm in Gilead? is there no.** Is there no remedy for conditions, no peace of mind or consolation? See *Jeremiah* viii, 22.

**bamboozle, to.** To induce by trickery; obtain by cunning. Used with *into* and *out of*.

You intend to *bamboozle* me out of a beefsteak.

Rowe *The Biter* act i, sc 1.

**Banbury.** A woman of easy virtue.

Witness took several names and addresses, and some of the females described themselves as *Banburys*, and said they got their living as best they could

*The People*, London Feb 4, 1894

**Banbury cheese, like a.** Very lean; emaciated; nothing but skin and bone.

You are *like a Banbury cheese*, nothing but paring

Brewer citing *Jack Drum's Entertainment* in "Phrase and Fable" p 91

Banbury cheese is a rich milk-cheese made very thin, hence said to be *nothing but rind*

**Banbury Cross, to ride a cock-horse to.** To amuse a child by swinging it up and down on one's foot crossed over the knee. The nursery rime runs:

Ride a cock-horse

With rings on her fingers

To Banbury Cross,

And bells on her toes,

To see an old woman

She shall have music

Ride on a white horse.

Wherever she goes

**Banbury-man.** A Puritan: so called by Ben Jonson because the city of Banbury, in Oxfordshire, England, was noted for the religious fervor of its inhabitants.

A *Banbury man* will hang his cat on Monday for catching mice on Sunday

*Popular Saying*

I did ever hate your sanctimonious *Banbury-man*

George Augustus Sala *Captain Dangerous* I, i, 15

**bandbox, neat as a.** Very neat, as articles of dress folded carefully and placed in a bandbox; hence, dressed with care.

**bandy words, to.** To exchange reproaches; waste time in useless discussion; to engage in contention or angry argument.

Mischief, spirit, and glee sparkled all over her face as she thus *bandied words* with the old Cossack.

Charlotte Brontë *Shirley* xii

**bang<sup>1</sup>.** [U. S.] To outdo, as in a competitive contest; excel; as, to *bang* the best of them. Used also for energy and dash, noise, or blow, hence, **to bang it about** is to come to blows, **to bang a door** is to slam it in closing it; **to bang the bush** is to reap the reward of one's labor, (see **BEAT THE BUSH**); **to bang a piano or ivories** is to play loudly or pound upon it

**bang<sup>2</sup>.** To cut so as to dress across the forehead, as hair; to dock, as the tail of a horse. Said to be derived from cutting "bang off."

The man who *bangs* his hair hasn't enough sense to blow out his brains even if he possessed any. *New York Commercial Advertiser* quoted by J. Redding Ware in "Passing English," p 18

**bang up.** First-rate; of highest excellence; splendid.

**banian or banyan day.** A day when no flesh-meat is issued to sailors; hence, a day of poor fare; usually in the British navy, one day in the week.

On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays the ship's company had no allowance of meat, and these meager days were called *banyan days*

SMOLLETT *Roderick Random* XXV  
The religion of the *Banians* (Hindus) not permitting them to eat anything that hath had life *Phil Trans* xi 752

**bank-monger.** [U.S. Pol.] An unscrupulous financier: a phrase coined by Thomas Jefferson, in opposing banking schemes.

I was derided as a maniac by the tribe of *bank-mongers*, who were seeking to filch from the public their swindling and barren gains

JEFFERSON *Letter to John Adams*, Jan 24, 1814

**bar, the.** The enclosed place occupied by counsel in a court-room.—

**at the bar of the court.** In open court.—**to be called to the bar.**

To be admitted to the practise of law.—**prisoner at the bar.** Prisoner before the court.

**bar.** [U. S. Colloq.] Bear. Used especially in the phrases **loaded for bar**, **out for bar**, meaning, prepared, as with a loaded gun, for bear; hence, looking for big game; seeking large enterprises.

**barkeeper, bartender.** [U. S.] One who mixed and served alcoholic drinks over a **bar**, as in a saloon: so called from the bar or counter behind which he officiated.

**bar out.** To shut out as, a schoolmaster from his schoolroom, or professor from the college buildings: done in sport or in rebellion.

Like schoolboys of old at a *barring out*, the Virginians resisted their government

BANCROFT *Hist of the United States*, vol iii, p 30

**barbecue.** An open-air feast at which whole animals are roasted over live coals.

Oldfield, with more than harpy throat subdued!

Cries, "Send me, ye gods, a whole hog *barbecued*!" POPE *Satires* ii, 25

At the Brooklyn *barbecue* which Governor Cleveland recently attended, 5,000 kegs of beer were dispensed

*The Boston Journal*, Oct 27, 1884

**barber knows that, every.** It is common gossip. Attributed to the days when barbers' shops were fashionable lounging places where every scandal of the town was discussed.

**bargain, a Dutch or wet.** A transaction closed with a drink.

The recruit took the condition of a soldier, with a guinea to make it a *wet bargain*

WINDHAM *Speeches* II, 271

I hate a *Dutch bargain* that's made in the heat of wine OTWAY *Friendship in F* 16

**bargain, into the.** Over and above what one has agreed to; moreover; in addition; besides.

This is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 'twill serve not only as a hammer, but a catalogue *into the bargain*

SHERIDAN *School for Scandal* act iv, sc 1

**bargain, to make the best of a bad.** To make the best of adverse circumstances; to bear ill-luck with fortitude.

Mrs Thrale was all for, according to vulgar phrase, *making the best of a bad bargain*

BOSWELL *Johnson* II 341

**bargain, to strike a.** 1. To complete a transaction; close negotiations: originally done by the shaking (striking) of hands. 2. To find something for sale at a low price.

**barge-pole, not fit to touch with the end of a.** So debased or filthy as to be unfit for association or touch; unapproachable. Rendered also, **not fit to be touched with a ten-foot pole**, formerly also, **except with an axe.**

You *aren't fit* for any decent man to touch except with an executioner's axe

HYNE *Falsbustlers*, xii

**bark against or bay at the moon.** To rail at persons one can not approach; beset with abuse uselessly; to labor in vain; to waste time and energy.

He hath such honorable friends to guard him,  
We should in that but *bark against the moon*

HEYWOOD *Fort by Land* I 1

I'd rather be a dog, and *bay the moon*, than such a Roman

SHAKESPEARE *Julius Cæsar* act iv, sc 3

**bark up the wrong tree.** [U. S. Colloq.] To be on the wrong scent or adopt the wrong course; be away from the right track. When a dog trained to hunt raccoons and opossums by driving them into a tree locates a catamount, it barks up the wrong tree.

If you think you can run a rig on me, you have made a mistake, and *barked up the wrong tree*

HALIBURTON *Human Nature* 124

**bark worse than the bite.** Angry words and threats, with nothing worse to follow.

The *bark* of electioneering mobs is worse than their bite

DE QUINCEY *Cicero* Wks VI 184

**barking dogs seldom bite.** Blustering and swaggering bulhes do not often act.

**barley, to cry.** To ask a truce.

A proper lad o' his quarters, that will not *cry barley* in a bruizie

SIR WALTER SCOTT *Waverley* xiii

**Barleycorn, Sir John.** A personification of malt liquor. According to an English proverb, "the strongest knight," said to be related to the Spanish grandee, Señor Don Demonio Ron.

A pleasant new ballad of the bloody murder of *Sir John Barleycorn*

Title of MS in *Pepysian Library* (c 1620)

Inspiring bold *John Barleycorn*

What dangers thou canst make us scorn

BURNS *Tam o' Shanter* 105

**Barmecide's feast.** An illusory banquet or benefit: from the tale, in the *Arabian Nights*, of an imaginary feast served by a Barmecide prince of Bagdad to a beggar named *Schacabac*, setting only empty dishes before him.

It is a *Barmecide's Feast*, a pleasant field for the imagination to rove in

DICKENS *Amer Notes*

The young Mongolet treated us only to *Barmecide* fare

STANLEY *Through the Dark Continent* I p 181.

**barn-burners.** [U. S. Colloq.] A radical Democrat.

This school of Democrats was termed *barn-burners*, in allusion to the story of the old Dutchman who relieved himself of rats by burning down his barns, which they infested. — just like exterminating all banks and corporations, to root out the abuses connected therewith

*New York Tribune* (c 1848), quoted by Bartlett in *Americanisms*

**barnstormer.** A strolling-player: from the custom of playing in barns when theaters were not available.

A ranting, noisy style of acting and speaking is still called "*barn-storming*"

*The Graphic*, London, April 10, 1886

**Barnumize.** To advertise in the highfalutin language used by the late Phineas T. Barnum in booming "the greatest show on earth"; hence, **Barnumism**, exaggeration.

*Barnumizing* the prodigy through Europe *Blackwood's Magazine* LXXII 307.

It is *Barnumism* that prompts clergymen to tell their flocks that they must fight the Confederates until Hell freezes over, and then fight them on the ice

*The Daily Telegraph*, London, Oct 22, 1862.

**barrack, to.** [Austral.] To deride or jeer, as with mock applause. Also, to encourage one party or oppose another with boisterous cheering.

**barrage fire.** [Military.] Fire designed to create a zone of death which shall bar the enemy from sending reinforcements to hinder the advance of opposing troops. There are three types, the **box**, used in raids; the **creeping**, which moves steadily ahead of the advancing soldiers, and the **jumping**, which, after playing on one line for a certain interval, jumps to another.

**barrel or boodle campaign.** [U. S.] A productive source of enthusiasm in many American political campaigns.

The phrase is said to have originated about 1876, when a wealthy candidate for office remarked, "Let the boys know that there's a barrel o' money ready for 'em."

We are accustomed to *barrel campaigns* here . . . the Democrats depend upon carrying it with money *Boston Journal*, Nov 1, 1884

Mr Flower was the nominal candidate of the anti-Cleveland men four years ago, and with the aid of his *barrel*, they achieved some show of success

*Florida Times-Union*, Feb 11, 1888

**basket case.** [U. S.] A soldier who has survived the loss of both his arms and legs.

There has been no instance of an American soldier so wounded during the whole period of the war *U S Bulletin*, March 28, 1919.

**basket, to.** To consign to the waste-basket; to reject or discard.

Your handwriting will cause our . . . sub-editor to *basket* your communications rather summarily *PROCTOR Knowledge*, July 13, 1883

**basket of chips.** [U. S.] Something pleasant and cheerful, as an abundance of chips for a fire in cold weather suggesting warmth and comfort.

I let him in, smiling like a *basket of chips* F W THOMAS *Sketches*, p 283

**basket, to be left in the.** To remain unchosen or in the bottom of a basket, as bruised apples, windfalls, etc.

Whatever he wants, he has only to ask it,  
And all other suitors are left in the basket

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends, House Warming.*

**basket, to give the.** To reject an offer of marriage. See MITTEN.

**baste.** To thrash or beat soundly; hence, **to get a basting:** To receive a thrashing. Both are humorous applications of **baste**, to soak, as with juice or fat in cooking.

I pray you eat none of it, . . . Lest it make you Choleric, and purchase me another *dry basting* SHAKESPEARE *Comedy of Errors* act II, sc 1

I took a broom and *basted* her till she cried extremely PEPPS *Diary*, Dec 1, 1660.

**bat, at the.** In baseball and cricket the side having the inning, or the player in the act of batting or about to bat.

The home team were no better *at the bat* for six innings

*The World*, New York, Sept 24, 1892

**bat, off his own.** [Gt. Brit.] The score made by a cricketer solely by his own play; hence, by one's own exertions, or on one's own account.

He had no revenues but what he got off his own bat

SYDNEY SMITH *Fragm Irish Ch Wks* II, 340.

**bat one's eyes.** To wink.

He shakes his head, and *bats his eyes*, and blunders back

F B CARPENTER *Six Months at the White House* p 271.

**bat, to go on a.** [U. S.] To engage in boisterous revelry; go on a spree.

I went on a bat in S's room, and we smoked and drank till three

W J WASHBURN *Fair Harvard* p 102

**bate an ace.** Bring down or reduce in the slightest degree: used usually with a negative.

**bate one's breath.** Check or restraining one's breathing; hold one's breath, as through fear, awe, etc.

**bat-fowling.** The dazing of birds with a light and striking them down from their roost with a bat.

SHAKESPEARE *Tempest* act ii, sc 1

**Bath. 1.** A fashionable health resort in Somersetshire, England, the name of which is associated with the following phrases:

(1) **Bath bun**, a small sugared cake made there, (2) **Bath brick**, a limestone used in cleaning knives and metal originally found there, (3) **Bath chair**, an invalid chair mounted on wheels, first introduced there—**go to Bath!** [Gt Brit.] Stop talking nonsense from **go to Bath and get your head shaved**, because formerly insane persons were sent to Bath for treatment. Used also in ordering some one to go away, hence, equivalent to **go to Halifax**, go begging, as Bath was once infested with beggars. "Go to Bath!" said the Baron. A defiance so contemptuous roused the ire of the adverse commanders

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends*, Grey Dolphin

**battle royal. 1.** A free fight or general engagement. **2.** Hence, a controversy, as about matters of faith. **3.** A wrangling dispute.

(1) We may as well have a *Battle Royal*, Line-of-Battle Ships opposed to Ships of the Line, and Frigates to Frigates

NELSON *Niolas Disp* VI, 178

(2) Though Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, holy chiefs,  
Have made a *battle royal* of beliefs

DRYDEN *Hind and Panther* II, 248

(3) A *battle royal* speedily took place between the two worthy mothers-in-law

THACKERAY *Shabby Genteel Story* VI

**battle, the first stroke is half the.** The method of attack determines the end; hence, the way in which a task is approached shows how it will be accomplished.

**battledore boy.** An abecedarian, an ignoramus.

—not to know *battledore* from a bull's foot. To be illiterate. See A and B—to play *battledore* and *shuttlecock* with. To pass to and fro or from one person to another, as a shuttlecock in the game of *battledore* and *shuttlecock*

**bauble.** A short baton with an ass's head and ears at one end carried by licensed jesters.

—a fool should never hold a *bauble* in his hand. A stupid person should not display his folly—**deserve the bauble.** Be so stupid as to be worthy of a fool's bauble—if every fool held a *bauble* **fuel** would be dear. There are so many stupid people in the world that if each one carried a *bauble* there would be no wood for fuel

**Bay State.** Massachusetts, which had been the Colony of Massachusetts Bay.

I see that in the good old *Bay State* there is even now a struggle to keep the negro children out of the common schools

McWILLIE of Miss *Speech* in the House of Representatives, March 4, 1850.

**bay the moon.** See under BARK.

**Bayard.** A wonderfully speedy, priceless horse (see Villeneuve *Les Quatre Fils Aymon*).

—to keep *Bayard* in the stable. To keep what you value under lock and key.

—to ride *Bayard* of ten toes. To travel afoot, ride shanks's mare.

**bayonets.** Military force

It is on the *bayonets* that a Quartermaster General relies for his working and fatigue parties. HOWITT *History of England*, p. 260

**beach-comber.** One who lives idly or disreputably on the seashore, as runaway seamen in the Pacific islands, a white loafer on Polynesian shores

The term *beach-comber* describes men who drift along the beaches of the islands picking up a precarious existence. It is said that the term was first applied to the old miners who combed the sands of the beach on the west coast of New Zealand for gold.

FRANK COFFEE *Forty Years on the Pacific* p. 288.

The white scamps who, as *beach combers*, have polluted these Edens and debauched their inhabitants. *Athenaeum*, Dec. 18, 1880

**bead<sup>1</sup>.** A prayer from the Anglo-Saxon *béd, bēdes*

— **bead-roll** A list of persons to be prayed for — **to bid, count, number, recite, say or tell one's beads** To say one's prayers, as by means of beads on a rosary. — **to pray without one's beads** To be out of one's reckoning, count one's chickens before they are hatched

**bead<sup>2</sup>.** A metal ball used as a sight on a gun-barrel

— **to draw a bead on** To take a careful and deliberate aim at as with a shotgun or rifle

**beam-end,** The end of one of a ship's cross-beams. Hence **on the beam-**

**ends.** Laid completely over on the side, as a ship in a gale. — **to be on one's beam-ends.** To be thrown completely over, be at one's last shift or in desperate circumstances — **to kick or strike the beam.** To rise so as to strike against the cross-beam as the lighter scale of a balance, hence, to be of light weight, of little importance, or of no consequence

**bean<sup>1</sup>.** [Gt Brit.] A sovereign, hence, **beans, money** — **to be full of beans.** To be in funds. Also (but derived from BEAN<sup>2</sup>), to be in fine form and good health

The game began. "Ich dien," shouted Jack, as full of beans as the Prince of Wales's plume. *The Sporting Times* London, June 29, 1880

**bean<sup>3</sup>.** A seed or fruit of a leguminous plant — **every bean has its**

**black** Every one has faults, even as every bean has a black spot — **to find the bean in the cake.** To have the advantage over one's opponents — an allusion to the practise of hiding a bean in a twelfth-cake, the finder of which is proclaimed king of the twelfth-night festival — twelve days after Christmas

**beans are in flower.** The silly season is here, attributed to the proverb

"When beans are in flower fools are in full strength," from the belief that the perfume of the bean-flower affected the brain, producing light-headedness.

**beans make five, to know how many.** To be well-informed, shrewd, and intelligent.

**beans, not to know.** [U S.] To know little or nothing.

When our recent Tutor is heard to speak,

This truth one certainly gleans,

Whatever he knows of Euclid and Greek,

In Latin he don't know beans

*Yale Lit Mag* XX 192

**beans, to abstain from.** Refrain from voting: from the Pythagorean warning, based on the use of beans in political elections, to stay out of public life by avoiding the polls.

*Abstain from beans, i.e., intermeddle not in the affairs of State*

HOLLAND *Plutarch's Mor* 15

Aristotle says the word *bean* means venery and that the prohibition to abstain from beans was equivalent to "keeping the body chaste"

BRI WFR *Phrase and Fable* p. 107



**beans, to get.** To be reproved or to incur punishment

**beans, to spill the.** [U. S.] To cause trouble, get oneself into a disagreeable predicament or difficulty equivalent to **upset the apple-cart**, used in England

"*I spilled the beans.*" Rear Admiral WILLIAM S. SIMS, referring to his "jackass" speech before the English-Speaking Union, London, June 7, 1921

**—the beans are spilled.** [U. S.] The plan is spoiled; the fat is in the fire, the jig is up

'Well, the *beans* are all spilled, and I think that I am through with baseball'

Comment of a player who confessed to being bribed to "throw a game"

*The Sun* New York, Sept. 30, 1920

**bean-feast.** [Gt. Brit.] An annual dinner given by an employer to the people he employs. See **WAYZGOOSE**.

**Bear.** On the stock exchange, a dealer who speculates for a fall, and as such, the opponent of a **BULL**

Originally the term was applied to stock sold for delivery at a certain date, on the chance of falling prices which would enable the seller to repurchase at a profit used in that sense in 1720 in London Stock Exchange circles at the time the South Sea Bubble burst. *Bear* speculators were called buyers of *bear-skins*

To sell a *bear*, to sell what one hath not

*Bailey Dict*

**—the arena of the bears and bulls.** The floor of the stock-exchange

**bear, or a perfect bear.** Rough, unmannerly, and uncouth

The French people of learning are not *bears* as most of ours are

CHESTERFIELD *Lett* III. cclxii 202

**bear a hand.** To aid quickly, take hold.

Get him to *bear a hand*

DICKENS *Mut Friend* VI. 307

**bear by the tooth, to take a.** To run risks unnecessarily, put one's head into the lion's mouth.

**bear company, to.** To accompany or associate with, be one's companion.  
His faithful dog shall *bear him company*

POPE *Essay on Man* ep. I, 112

**bear down, to.** To overcome or force down, overpower

A tremendous crashing in the jungle and continued shouts assured us that they were *bearing down* exactly upon our direction

BAKER *Nile Tribut* XIII, 328

**bear down on or upon, to.** To approach from the weather side: said of a ship

**bear-garden.** Formerly, a place where bears were kept for sport; hence, a scene of tumult or strife

Used also in the phrase **a perfect bear-garden**, to designate any place of tumultuous conflict, noisy brawling, etc.

He called Burke a *bear-garden* raider

FORSTER *Life of Goldsmith* IV. xi

The *bear-garden* like Babel was rather more noisy than usual

ARCHIBALD FORBES *War between France and Germany* 301

**bear in mind.** To keep in recollection; remember

Worthy to be continually borne in *mynde*

TAVERNER *Erasm. Prov* 20

He promised to *bear the subject in mind*

MACAULAY *History of England* IV. 313

**bear-leader.** One who leads about a trained bear, hence, a private tutor

They seized young lords travelling with their *bear-leaders*

THACKERAY *Book of Snobs* p. 47

**bear one hard.** To cherish ill will toward one.

Caius Ligarius doth *bear Cæsar hard*

SHAKESPEARE *Julius Cæsar* act II, sc. 1

**bear out.** To give support or countenance to; confirm; justify, make endurable

You think, I suppose, that your friends will *bear you out*

MARIA EDGEWORTH *Mona's Tale* I, xiv. 66

*Æschines* by no means *bears him out*, and *Plutarch* directly contradicts him

MACAULAY *Essays*, *Mitford's History of Greece*

**bear, she's a.** [U. S.] She is a dear, she is attractive, she is charming and fit to hug, as a bear hugs.

**bear, to play the.** To treat rudely or roughly; play the deuce with; damage.

When we have so turned all order vpsidowne  
the beare amongst vs

there is nothing but playing  
TOMSON *Calvin's Sermon*, *Tim* 473 1

**bear up, to.** To endure without being overcome, keep up one's courage, as to *bear up* in the face of adversity.

**bear with.** Endure; also, show forbearance toward.

**bear with a sore head, as cross or savage as a.** Unreasonably provoked, suffering from uncontrollable passion; irrationally enraged, mentally irresponsible, as one blinded by anger.

**beard.** To contradict flatly, oppose openly and defiantly with daring or effrontery; to insult by pulling the beard—to **beard the lion in his den.** To defy any one in his own place, home, house, or office.

Fierce he broke forth—"And dar'st thou then

To beard the lion in his den,

The Douglas in his hall?"

SCOTT *Marmion* canto vi, st 14

**beard, to laugh in one's.** To smile secretly in derision.

**beat<sup>1</sup>.** A path beaten by treading

Hence, **off one's beat** Not in one's walk in life, not in his line —**on one's beat.**

In one's line or sphere of business —**out of one's beat.** Same as **OFF ONE'S BEAT**

**beat<sup>2</sup>.** A worthless fellow. See **DEAD BEAT**

**beat<sup>3</sup>.** In journalism, the priority of publication of an item of interest, a scoop

**beat.** To strike; excel; overcome; get the advantage of; retire.—**beat about the bush.** To approach a subject in a roundabout way, to proceed cautiously, as a hunter does

After some hours spent in *beating about the bush*

PRINGLE *African Sketches* VII, 256

**beat all, or beat all hollow.** [U. S.] To greatly surpass; prove immeasurably superior to.

**beat a retreat.** To retreat; to withdraw from an enterprise.

With the help of his pipe (he) debated with himself the question of *beating a retreat*

HUGHES *Tom Brown at Oxford* III, iv, 74

**beat down.** To secure at a lower price by haggling, also, to lower.

Monopoly will *beat down* prices

BENTHAM *Works* IV, 413

**beat goose, to.** [Gt Brit] To strike the arms across the chest, to keep warm. Called also **beat the booby.**

The common laborers at outdoor work were *beating goose* to drive the blood into their fingers

*The Times* London, March 15, 1883.

**beat it!** [U. S.] Clear out; go away.

**beat one to it.** [U. S.] To attain before a competitor; gain an advantage or contest; to slip one over; to deliver the goods.

**beat the air or wind.** To make futile exertions.

So fight I, not as one that *beateth the air*

*I Corinthians* ix, 26

**beat the bush.** To range or scour over the country in hunting; to search and shake the bushes for game; also, to drive or march across (a region),

arousing the game and driving it, or some elected kind, toward the hunters

Cast yovre sparrowhawk in to a tre and *beete the bushes*

*Book St Albans*

**beats the bush another catches the hare, one.** One does the work another reaps the benefit, profit, or reward

**beat the devil.** [U S] To beat or surpass everything except the Dutch  
See BEAT THE DUTCH

His first words were, "*It beats the devil*"

*Knickerbocker Magazine* Jan. 1858

**beat the devil's tattoo, to.** To tap with one's fingers as on a table, or with one's feet on the floor

**beat the Dutch, to.** [U S. Colloq.] To be especially strange or surprising, as "Well, if that doesn't *beat the Dutch*" a phrase originating in the days when bitter enmity prevailed between the Dutch and other nations

That *beats the Dutch*, saith the proverb, meaning that, as the Dutch beat Old Nick, it is something of an exploit to beat them

*The Public Ledger* Philadelphia, Feb. 6, 1837

**beat up one's quarters.** To look up one's relatives, to visit unceremoniously

Travel around the country and *beat up their friends' quarters* all the way

*RICHARDSON Pamela* II, 179

Sunday coming round, he set off therefore after breakfast  
Captain Cuttle's quarters

*DICKENS Dombey and Son*

**Beau Brummel.** One dressed in the height of style

The glass of fashion and the mould of form,  
The observed of all observers!

*SHAKESPEARE Hamlet* act III, sc. 1

From George Bryan Brummel, a leader of fashion in London early in the 19th century

**beau ideal.** A mental model of excellence, the highest conceivable type of beauty or excellence, also, some person or thing regarded as the realization of such a model

Agricultural life appears to have been his *beau ideal* of existence

*IRVING Washington* vol I, p. 284

**beau monde.** [F] The world of fashion or the people who move in it.

**Beauty and the Beast.** A lovely woman associated with an uncouth or ugly man in allusion to the fairy-tale in Straparola's *Pracevoli Notti* (1550)

To save her father Beauty (*Zempe*) becomes the guest of a hideous but kindly monster (*Izot*), who wins her love and is thereupon retransformed into a handsome prince

**beauty is but skin deep.** Loveliness is no deeper than the surface.

The saying that *beauty is but skin deep* is but a skin-deep saying

*HERBERT SPENCER Personal Beauty*

**beauty of it, that's the.** That is the feature or phase that makes it worth while or gives satisfaction or pleasure

*That's the beauty of it*, to offend and make up at pleasure

*RICHARDSON Grandison* III, xviii, 159

**beauty-sleep.** The first sleep; sleep before midnight

"You must get your *beauty sleep*," cried he to his wife when Barlow had departed, "or you will have no color in your cheeks tomorrow"

*JAMES PAYN Confidential Agent* III

**bed, make the.** Prepare a bed so that it is ready for use.

—as you make your bed you must lie on it. As you act so must you bear the consequences of your own deeds

I write not for those who, having *made their bed, must lie on it*, but for those whose lot has turned out "all worse and no better." DINAH MULLOCK *A Woman's Advice*

—to get out of bed the wrong way. To be ill-tempered and out of sorts

**bed of roses.** A condition of ease and comfort

The present Administration may be considered as on a *bed of roses*

CASLEIGH *Speech* April 3, 1806

**bedfellows, misery or poverty acquaints a man with strange.** Nothing stands in the way of companionship among the wretched and needy  
Used also of other associations, as with *charity, politics, etc.*

*Strange bedfellows politics makes*, it is said,

But strange you'll agree as return of the dead

Is to see Herr von Hearst taken up, made immune

And "coiled" in a bed with the New York Tribune

T. WALLACE in *The World* New York, Oct. 24, 1920

**Bedfordshire.** [Brit.] An English county used humorously for *bed*, hence,  
**I am off to Bedfordshire.** I am going to bed.

The time for sleep had come at last,

And there was the bed, so soft, so vast,

Quite a field of Bedfordshire clover

'Faith, I'm for Bedfordshire

HOOD *Miss Kilmansiegg*

SWIFT *Polite Conversation* 111

**Bedlam.** A corruption of *Bethlehem* from St. Mary of Bethlehem, a priory founded in London in 1217, and converted into a hospital for the insane in 1547. Hence,

(1) **Bedlamite**, a lunatic (2) **Bess of Bedlam**, an insane woman (3) **Tom of Bedlam**, a beggar who pleads lunacy in asking charity

**bedpost, in the twinkling of a.** Right away, immediately See Introduction, page vi.

**bed-rock, to come down or get to.** [U. S.] To have reached the bottom of a thing, to solve a difficulty, understand, also, to be at the end of one's resources

I play this yere hand alone To come down to bedrock, it's just this

BREK HART *Poems and Prose* 113

Getting the real character of a man is coming to the bedrock

*Scribner's Magazine* p. 277, (1875)

**bee in the bonnet, to have a.** To be possessed of a persistent or fixed ambition or idea, be cranky or slightly crazy.

John Hunter, notwithstanding he had a bee in his bonnet, was really a great man

DE QUINCEY *Narrative Papers, Coleridge and Opium Eating* p. 141

**bee-line.** The shortest or most direct course from one place to another, like that taken by a bee returning to the hive, a straight line, as the crow flies

We moved on like men in a dream Our footmarks seen afterwards showed that we had steered a bee-line for the brig

KANE *Arctic Explorations* vol. 1, p. 198

**bees, to have a head full of.** To be full of visionary schemes, queer notions, fanciful theories, etc.

**beef, embalmed.** See EMBALMED BEEF

**Beer and Bible Association.** [Brit. Pol.] Nickname of a party which, in Beaconsfield's last administration, opposed restrictions on the sale of alcoholic drink

**beer and skittles, not all.** [Brit.] Not all play, not altogether pleasant.  
Football wasn't all beer and skittles to the fags

MANSFIELD *School Life at Winchester College* 138

—life is not all beer and skittles. Life does not consist of feasting and playing

Life is with such all beer and skittles,

They are not difficult to please about their victuals

CALVERLEY *Contentment*

**Beerocracy.** [Brit.] The British brewing and beer-selling interests, whose leading men, on being called to the House of Lords, were said to have been "raised to the **Beerage**."

The startling mixture of *peage* and *beerocracy* was absent this time  
The World London, Jan. 19, 1881

**beer, small.** Weak beer, or beer small in alcoholic content, hence, figuratively, anything unimportant

Beers contain 3 to 6 per cent. of alcohol (*Encyc. Brit.*). The mildest of beers was formerly a Berlin Weissbier of 2.64 per cent. The mildest of American beers of the lager type approximated the 2.75 per cent. permitted in New York State before national prohibition became effective in the United States

To suckle fools and chronicle *small beer* SHAKESPEARE *Othello* act II, sc. 1

**beer of, to think small.** [Brit.] To have a low opinion of

She *thinks small beer* of painters, J. J.—Well, we don't *think small beer* of ourselves, my noble friend THACKERAY *Newcomes* XXXIX

**beetle-crusher or squasher.** [Brit.] A large foot, and hence a large boot or shoe. Term popularized in *Punch* by LILCH, and applied to infantry by cavalrymen

Writhing yet striving to look pleasant on the infliction which the *beetle-crusher* of a recent arrival had just inflicted on his pet corn BRADFORD *The O V H* XXI

**bee-tree.** [U. S.] A hollow tree where bees have deposited honey.

We encamped early, and cut a *bee-tree*, obtaining a good quantity of honey to eat with our bear meat ALBERT PIKE *Sketches* 76

**beggar, the absent-minded.** The British soldier as characterized by Kipling in a poem urging home support for the widows and orphans of soldiers at the front. *Beggar* has been changed more than once from an epithet of opprobrium to a title of honor, as when the Dutch patriots, so called by the Spaniards, "captured Holland," and the **Beggars of the Sea**, as the Dutch sea forces called themselves, won naval victories.

He's an *absent-minded beggar*, but he heard his country call,

And his regiment didn't need to send to find him

He chucked his job and joined it—so the job before us all

Is to help the home that Tommy's left behind him

RUDYARD KIPLING *The Absent-Minded Beggar*

**beggar may sing before a footpad, a.** One with no money need not fear a highwayman

**beggars should not be choosers.** Those who ask or receive favors should accept conditions.

**begging or to beg the question.** To take for granted the matter in dispute, assume without warrant something that involves the point under discussion.

*Begging the question* is when the thing to be proved is assumed in the premises

REID *Aristotle's Logic* V p. 118

**begging or a-begging, to go.** To be without demand, have no market value; seek in vain for a purchaser or receiver.

**believe me.** In very truth: a phrase used for emphasis which has the sanction of the classics.

*Believe me*, I do not believe thee, man SHAKESPEARE *Winter's Tale* act IV, sc. 4

*Crede mihi*, res est ingeniosa dare

*Believe me*, it is a clever thing to know how to give OVID *Amorum* bk. 1, 8 62

**belittle.** To disparage, depreciate; minify; treat as of no importance: a term coined by Thomas Jefferson.

**bell.** On shipboard, a stroke on a bell to announce the time

The 24 hours are divided into six watches, in each of which half-hours are marked by strokes on a bell. Beginning at midnight, one bell is half past twelve, and eight bells four o'clock, then, one bell is half past four, and eight bells eight o'clock, etc.

It struck seven bells, and he accompanied Mr. Joffe on deck.

MARRYATT *Mulshapman Easy* ix

**bell, book, and candle.** The attributes of the older offices of excommunication in the Roman Catholic Church, the office being read from a book, the bells rung, and the candles extinguished

—**to curse by bell, book, and candle.** To excommunicate—a solemn form of excommunication, which closes with "Doe to the book, quench the candle, ring the bell!"

It was pronounced four times a year against such as defrauded the Church of dues on (1) Advent Sunday, (2) First Sunday in Lent, (3) Trinity Sunday and (4) Sunday of the Virgin Mary.

Hold thy hand, on pain of bell, book and candle.

SCOTT *Fair Maid* I, 155

*Bell, book and candle shall not drive me back.*

*When gold and silver beck me to come on.*

SHAKESPEARE *King John* act iii, sc. 3

**bell the cat,** To plan or perform a bold or rash act, in reference to Æsop's fable of the mice that for self-protection resolved to put a bell around the cat's neck but dared not do it.

**bell, to bear away the.** To win the prize, as at a race.

*Vencez la bell from every city bore.*

BYRON *Beppo* X

**bells and let her fly, give her the.** Don't try to save a bad investment by adding more to it, send no more good money after bad, make the best of a bad bargain.

**belly-bumper, buster or whopper.** A small hand sled used by children in coasting down hill while lying upon it on the stomach: a sport from which tobogganning was developed.

**belt, under the.** Below the waist-band.

Hence, to oneself, as, **keep that under your belt,** keep it secret —**to hit or strike below the belt.** To take an unfair advantage of as, by striking unfairly, a blow below the belt being forbidden in boxing —**to hold the belt.** To excel, as in story-telling or anything else referred to — from the holding of the belt by the champion of a boxing bout.

**bench winner.** One who or that which has won a prize in an exhibition where the contestants occupy benches, as at beauty contests and dog-shows.

**bend, Grecian.** An affectation in walking with the body bent forward on the hips—a fad with English women between 1872 and 1880, when bustles were popular.

**bender<sup>1</sup>.** A drinking spree or frolic; also, a hard drinker; hence, **to go on a bender** [U. S.], to go on a drinking bout.

She had retained such refreshing simplicity as to associate the idea of some flexible substance with "bender," and to consider a work of art alone suggested by "bust."

T. B. GUNN *New York Boarding Houses* p. 174

**bender<sup>2</sup>.** [Gt. Brit.] A sixpenny-bit.

**benefit of clergy.** A privilege accorded to the clergy based on *I Chronicles* xvi, 22, and afterwards to all who could read by which one who had been convicted in a secular court of any crime except treason, could appeal to an ecclesiastical court, in arrest of judgment. If not in orders, the convict discharged on this claim was branded on the left thumb. Whipping and fines were afterward substituted for branding. Among the earliest enactments of the first

Congress of the United States (1790) was an act prohibiting "benefit of clergy" in any case of conviction of a capital crime

In 1513 the *benefit of clergy* was entirely taken away from murderers and highway robbers HALLAM'S *Constitutional History* I, II, 58

**benevolent assimilation.** [U. S. Pol.] See the quotation, which explains the attitude of President McKinley's administration toward the Filipino, after the purchase of the Philippine Islands from Spain

The mission of the United States is one of *benevolent assimilation*, substituting the mild sway of justice and right for arbitrary rule

PRESIDENT MCKINLEY *Letter to Gen. Otis*, Manila, Dec. 21, 1898

**Benjamin's mess.** The lion's share of anything, in allusion to *Genesis* xliii, 34, where Benjamin's mess is described as five times more than any of his brothers' messes.

**bent.** Tendency of mind, inclination, talent

—**bent on doing.** Determined to do —**to fool to the top of one's bent** To impose upon to the extent of one's desires

**Bermoothes.** An old form of *Bermudas*; the Spanish pronunciation of the name of the discoverer Juan *Bermudez* who sighted the islands in 1515. Sir George Somers landed there in 1609. Mentioned in Shakespeare's "Tempest," act I, sc. 2, written in 1611.

**Bermudas.** [London.] The obscure narrow courts or passages on the north side of the Strand, London, such as lead to Maiden Lane, Burling Street, etc.; the *Straits*; so called because the persons who dwell there sought seclusion through straitened circumstances

**Bermudas, to live in the.** To pass one's existence in an out of the way place; probably from the former practise of absconding to the Bermuda islands to defraud creditors. See preceding

**berth, to fall into a good or nice berth.** To secure a lucrative position.

**berth, to give a wide.** To keep at a distance from, avoid — often in nautical use.

**best, at the.** Under the most favorable circumstances, also, at the very best.

Shell fishes be *at the best* when the moon increaseth as the poet Horace noteth COGAN *Haven Health* 169

Good Brabantis take up this mangled matter *at the best* SHAKESPEARE *Othello* act I, sc. 3

External evidence must *at the very best* be but partial and secondary MYLES *Cath.* Th. IV, 19, 276

**best bib and tucker.** Best clothes.

The fair Bruces were flaunting in their *best bibs and tuckers* R. M. BIRD *Nick of the Woods*, I, 33

**best man.** The groomsmen at a wedding

The two bridegrooms entered, accompanied each by his friend, or *best man*, as this person is called in Scotland ELIZA ACTON *St. Johnstown* III, 90

**best of both worlds, to make the.** To get the good things of the earth without forfeiting heaven.

"Great captains, great statesmen and great so-called Christians, seeking to make the *best of both worlds*" SARAH TYTLER (*Henrietta Keddie*)

**best of it, to have the.** To have the advantage in a transaction, contest, or argument.

**best of it, to make the or your.** To make the most of; to reduce the disadvantage of to the least possible.

Carry their commodities where they may *make the best of them* BACON (1626).

I'll none of it, hence! *make your best of it*

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act iv, sc 3

**bet, you.** [U. S. Slang] Assuredly; certainly amplified to **you bet your boots, life, bottom dollar, or last dollar**, and meaning, "you risk or stake" the thing specified.

"The mosquitoes are pretty bad about here, madam" "You bet!"

MARK TWAIN *Roughing It* ch 2, p 27

"I'll bet my boots it isn't so" It was not an elegant expression for a young lady, but it was very emphatic

*Detroit Free Press*

They will all be faithfully preserved and frequently referred to—and bet your life on that

*The Columbian*, Olympia, Oct 2, 1852

**bête noire.** [F] An object of aversion, a thorn in the flesh, a bugaboo

**better.** Advantage; superiority

—for better for worse, for richer for poorer For higher moral qualities or state, and for greater fortune or for the reverse of these a phrase in "The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony" in the "Book of Common Prayer" —

I take thee to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health

**better half.** One's wife or husband

My deare, my better halfe (sawd hee) I find I must now leave thee

SIDNEY *Arcadia* III, 280

**better of, to get the.** To gain an advantage over.

Prudence got the better of his pride

THIRLWALL *Greece* VI, 137

**better off.** In more comfortable circumstances; in a better position financially

**better of the matter, to think.** To give closer attention to; consider from a different viewpoint; form a more satisfactory opinion about

**better than his word, to be.** To perform more than one has promised

**between Scylla and Charybdis.** Facing dangers equally perilous, on the horns of a dilemma.

**between the cup and the lip.** Not yet certain, still subject to accident

Nothing shall come between cup and lip to defeat thee ROGERS *Naaman* II 22

**between the devil and the deep sea.** Facing alternatives equally unpleasant or disadvantageous.

In passing from one part of the vessel to another when she was rolling, we were indeed between the devil and the deep sea

*Nineteenth Century* April 1891, p 664

**between the hay and the grass.** 1. Too late for one thing and too early for another. 2. Neither a man nor a boy

**between two fires.** Exposed to danger from two sides, in a situation of peculiar danger.

**between two stools, to fall.** To try to do two things at once, and consequently to fail in both.

**between ourselves, themselves, or you and me.** Confidential, in confidence; confidentially. The expression is sometimes expanded to **between you and me and the bed- or gate-post.**

Between you and me, I am often apt to imagine it has had some whimsical effect on my brain

STEELE *Spectator* 118 ¶ 3

Between you and me and the bed-post, young master has quarrelled with old master

LYRROX *Eugene Aram* IV, 1, 205

Steinye has a touch of the gout, and so, between ourselves, has your brother

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair*

**between wind and water.** 1. At that strip of a vessel's hull which in



rolling is alternately submerged and above water. **2.** In any particularly vulnerable part

Having received a shot *between wind and water*, she was forced to *lye by* to stop her  
leake LUTTRELL *Brief Rel* 11 637

**B flat** or **B.** [Brit. Slang] A bedbug. Called also **crimson rambler**; **scarlet creeper**; **mahogany flat**.

That little busy *B* which invariably improves the darkness at the expense of every offering traveller Cornhill Magazine April, 1867, p 450

**Bible oath, to take one's.** To make a solemn declaration, as with the hand on a Bible, as, he *took his Bible oath* to the truth of it

So long as it was not a *Bible-oath*, we may break it with a safe conscience

CONGRIEVE *Way of the World* act v, sc 2

**bid against, to.** To offer more money for, in competition with another, as at an auction

**bid defiance, to.** To brave, defy or challenge, resist determinedly.

**bid fair, to.** To give good promise, seem probable.

A man *bids fairer* for greatness of soul, who is the descendant of worthy ancestors ADDISON *The Guardian*, Aug 18, 1713

**bid for votes, to.** To appeal for support

**bid God-speed, to.** To pray that the Almighty may grant quick success to.

**bid one good-morning, or good-night, to.** To greet one in friendly salutation or expressing the hope or wish that one may pass the morning or the night well

**bid good-bye, to.** To say farewell or "God be with you" to. See GOODBYE

**bid the banns, to.** To ask if any one objects to (that is, *forbids*) a marriage.

**Big Bertha.** The popular name for the giant rifled cannon with which the Germans bombarded Paris from a distance of 78 miles in allusion to Bertha Krupp von Bochen and Hallbach at whose factory it was made

Each time that thundering explosion shook the air the people smiled at each other and cried, "Oho! *Big Bertha*!" Never again would that vicious old female drop her fatal pills on this pleasant city

ELIZABETH FRAZER *Saturday Evening Post*, Philadelphia, Mar 1, 1919

**big bug.** [U S] A person of importance either in his own estimation or in reality, a bigwig

There are the Mandarins, our *big bugs*, and I could name them to you

JOHN P. KENNEDY *Quodlibet* p 138

**big drink.** [U S.] The Mississippi River Sometimes but incorrectly the Atlantic Ocean

There never would have been any Atlantic Ocean if it hadn't been for the Mississippi, nor ever will be after we've turned the waters of that *big drink* in the Mammoth Cavern

*The Oregon Spectator* May 2, 1842

**biggest toad in the puddle.** The most important person in a community. **The biggest frog in the pond.**

**big head, to have a.** [U. S.] **1.** To have an inflated idea of one's importance; be conceited; overbearing, cocksure, bumptious; to have a swelled head **2** To suffer from the after-effects of a carouse.

**big mouth.** [U. S.] A noisy, bragging, loquacious person, who makes a **big noise or wind** (and hence is also so-called) and indulges in **big talk**, or highfalutin language.

**Big Muddy.** The Missouri River.

The waters of the *Big Muddy*, as the Indians call it, are not of a kind calculated to leave a clean record

*The Atlantic Monthly* Sept 1869, p 331

**Big Pond or Puddle.** The Atlantic Ocean

**big, to talk or look.** To talk with an air of importance or to assume an important attitude in order to try and impress others.

The Archdeacon waxed wroth, *talked big* and looked bigger

TROLLOPE *The Warden* 237

**big trees.** [U. S.] The Sequoias, Wellingtonias, or redwoods

The *big trees* proper are confined to certain groves on the western flank of the Sierra Nevada

*Harper's Magazine* Jan 1883

**big wig.** [Brit.] A person in importance in allusion to the wigs formerly worn by persons of consequence in Great Britain.

We lived among bankers and city *big wigs*, and he hauged to them, every man as he talks to you, is juggling his guiners in his pocket

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* XX

I didn't like what I saw when I was studying there (in London)—so much empty *big-wiggism* and obstructive trickery

GEORGE ELIOT *Middlemarch* XVIII

**Billingsgate.** Coarse vituperation; vulgar abusive language such as was formerly attributed to the fishwives of Billingsgate fishmarket, London.

—**to talk Billingsgate.** To assaul with scurrility, blackguard, talk coarsely to.

As long as faction feeds the flame, we shall never want *Billingsgate* to revile one another with

DILFEE *The Review* Preface, vii

**bird.** 1. A young girl; a maiden 2 [U. S.] A peculiar or a remarkable person; sometimes contemptuously.

Chippendale slept in the watch house

Chippendale is certainly a *bird*

*Spart of the Times* Philadelphia, Feb. 12, 1842

**Bird** is used frequently in combination—as, **a bird in the hand** An advantage one holds, a benefit, hence **a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, or woods** A certainty is worth double as much as a prospective advantage

**A bird in hand** is worth ten flye at large

H. RHOPE'S *Book of Nurture* 579

—**a bird of ill-omen** A person who habitually brings bad news, also, an unlucky person —**a bird of passage.** A person who shifts from place to place, an unsettled person —**a little bird whispered or told** Rumor hath it, it is commonly reported, but not on specific authority

For a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter

*Ecclesiastes* x, 2)

—**birds of a feather** Birds that resemble one another, hence, persons of like traits

—**birds of a feather flock together.** Persons of like tastes seek one another's society Usually disparagingly

The idle and dissipated like *birds of a feather flock together*

SOUTHEY *Doctor* LXV

—**old birds are not to be caught by chaff** Experience teaches us wisdom —**the bird of freedom, or of Washington.** The bald eagle, as the national emblem of the United States —**the bird of Jove.** The eagle —**The bird of Juno.** The peacock

—**the bird of Minerva, or the bird of night.** The owl —**the bird of peace.** The dove —**the early bird catches the worm.** The person who rises early reaps the reward of his effort

—**to get or give the bird or the big bird.** To be ridiculed, goaded, or hissed off the stage, also, to hiss, "the big bird being the goose"

To be "goosed," or, as it is sometimes phrased, "*to get the big bird*," is occasionally a tribute to the actor's power of representing villainy, but more often is disagreeably suggestive of a failure to please

*The Graphic* London, April 10, 1886.

—**to kill two birds with one stone.** To achieve two tasks with one effort, attain two results by the same means

Thus swimmingly the knave went on,  
And killed two birds with every stone

BRIDGES *Burlesque Homer* 180

**bird's-eye view.** A general view, as that seen by a bird or an aviator in flying over a place.

**birthday suit.** Nature's garb; a state of nudity.

And we bathed in our *birth-day suit*

SMOLLETT *Humphrey Clinker* I, 61

**Bishop.** A beverage made from red wine poured over ripe bitter oranges sugared and spiced. Called also **purple wine**.

**Bishop has set or put his foot in it, the.** [Eng.] The food has been scorched in cooking; hence, the thing is spoiled in allusion to ecclesiastical interference in affairs of State

If the pottage be burned to, or the meate over roasted, we say *the bishop hath put his foot in the pottage*, or *the bishop hath played the cooke*, because the bishops burn whosoever displeaseth them

TYNDALE *Works* p. 166

**bit<sup>1</sup>.** A silver coin, usually of the lowest denomination, as, the English threepenny *bit*. There was formerly a fourpenny piece called **bit** now withdrawn from circulation. The American silver quarter of a dollar was commonly called two bits, but there were no one-bit pieces. A **long bit** was 15 cents, a **short bit** 10 cents

A *bit* is the Pennsylvania elevenpence, the New York shilling, and the New England ninepence

ARTHUR SINGLETON *Letters from the South and West* p. 127 (1819)

The *bit* is a mythical quantity. It is neither twelve-and-a-half cents, nor half of twenty-five cents, it is neither fifteen cents nor ten cents. If you buy a *bit's* worth and thrown down twenty-five cents you get ten cents back, if you offer the same ten cents in lieu of a *bit*, you are looked upon as a mild sort of a swindler

*Scribner's Magazine* July, 1875

**bit<sup>2</sup>.** A small part or fragment.

—a **good bit**. [Eng.] A long distance or period of time —**bit by bit**. Little by little, piecemeal —**not a bit or not the least bit**. Not at all —**not a bit of it**. Not by any means —**to do one's bit**. [Gt. Brit.] To serve one's country in the army or navy in time of war —**to give any one a bit of one's mind**. To express a frank opinion of usually implying a severe reproof or scolding, or [U. S.] a laying out

He had *given* the House what was called a "*bit of his mind*" on the subject

LORD CAMPBELL in *The Times* London, April 12, 1864

—**to take the bit between the teeth**. To take hold in such a way that it will not hurt, hence, to become unmanageable, be headstrong or obstinate

**bite the dust, the ground, or sand.** To fall prostrate, be vanquished or slain.

A bullet whistled o'er his head,

The foremost Tartar *bites* the ground

BYRON *The Giaour* s. 20

First Odus falls, and *bites* the bloody sand

POPE *Iliad*, V. 51

**bite the lip or tongue.** To repress emotion or utterance.

And many times they *bite* their lips alone

KEATS *Isabella* xxii

She had to *bite* her lips till the blood came in order to keep down the angry words that would rise in her heart

MRS GASKELL *Mary Barton* ch. 11

**bite the thumb at.** To make a gesture of contempt with intention to offend or defy.

I will *bite* my thumb at them, which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it

SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* act 1, sc. 1

It is very probable that the act of *biting* the thumb was not so much a gesture of insulting contempt as a threat

*Chambers' Book of Days*, Mar. 11, 1868

**bitter-ender.** One who opposed a negotiated peace before the defeat of the Central Powers in the World War (1914-1918).

For a long time the President kept an open mind, and German frightfulness filled it at last to overflowing. He is therefore to-day a *bitter-ender*

*The Saturday Review* London, Sept. 14, 1918

**black and blue.** Livid from contusion, said of a bruise in flesh. Used also in the phrase, **to beat black and blue.** To strike repeatedly until the skin is bruised and discolored.

**Black and Tans.** [Brit. Pol.] The Auxiliary Division of the Royal Irish Constabulary, a police force charged with suppressing disorder in Ireland following the close of the World War, so-called from their uniforms—tan faced with black.

**black and white, to put down in.** To write down on paper; also to print.

I have it here *in black and white* JONSON *Every Man in His Humour* act iv, sc. 2  
A man can't so much as put on a pair of clean stockings in the morning, but it's laid before high quarters *in black and white* at mid-day by the secret police

MRS H. WOOD *Johnny Ludlow* 1 Ser. No. XII 202

**black-draft.** An infusion of senna, manna, magnesium sulfate, and fennel.

Go enjoy your dull *black draughts* of metaphysics

THACKERAY *Paris Sketch-Book, French Fashionable Novels.*

**black fast,** In Ireland, a fast-day observed by members of the Roman Catholic Church, on which no flesh-meat or white meat (flesh, butter, eggs, cheese, or milk) is allowed, as on Ash Wednesday and Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday of Holy Week.—**great fast,** Lent.

**Black Friday.** 1. Any Friday marked by a public calamity, as in England by the advance of the Pretender to Derby (Dec. 6, 1745), or by the financial panic of May 11, 1866, and in the United States, by similar disasters in New York on Sept. 24, 1869, and Sept. 19, 1873. 2. Good Friday, from the color of the vestments worn on that day by the clergy.

**Black Hand.** 1. A Spanish secret society suppressed in 1883. 2. In the United States, a mythical society of Italian criminals originated by James Philip McCarthy of the *New York Herald* to account for a mysterious crime in Brooklyn. He described "La mano nero" as the symbol of a Mafia organization.

**blackmail.** 1. Extortion by intimidation; especially, extortion of money.

2. A tax of money, cattle, crops, paid to freebooters to insure immunity from pillage; declared a felony under Elizabeth (1601).

Were I to lose all my fortune, I could, by turning *blackmaster*, ensure a permanent income twice as large

JULIAN HAWTHORNE *Laughing Mill* 108

**Black Monday.** 1. Easter Monday, 1360. so-called from a remarkably dark and violent hail-storm; hence, any Easter Monday

According to the "Chronicles of London," 13 "In the same yere (1360) the xiiii day off April and the morwe after Ester Day, Kyng Edward with his Oost lay byfore the Citee off Parys, the which was a foule Derke day so bytter colde, that syttyng on horse bak men dyed Wherefore unto this day (1435) yt ys called *blak Monday*"

It was not for nothing that my nose fell ableeeding on *Black Monday* last, at six o'clock i' the morning

SHAKESPEARE *MERCHANT OF VENICE* act II, sc. 5.

2. At boy's schools, the first Monday after holidays.

She now hated my sight, and made home so disagreeable to me that what is called by schoolboys *Black Monday* was to me the whitest in the whole year

FIELDING *Tom Jones* VIII, x1

**black rent.** Exactions of money levied by native chieftains on the English settled in Ireland.

**black Republican.** [U. S.] A member of the Republican party formed in 1854: derisively so called in allusion to his friendliness to the negro. The political antithesis of a *Bourbon Democrat*.

**black sheep.** A bad character, as in a class, as, there are *black sheep* in every flock, also, an evil-disposed or disreputable member of a family or society.

Jekyll is not such a *black sheep* neither but what there are some white hairs about him

SCOTT *St Ronan's Well* II 312.

Your Uncle Silas had injured himself before that in the opinion of the people of his county He was a *black sheep*, in fact Very bad stories were told and believed of him

LE FANU *Uncle Silas* XXVI

**black strap.** Any cheap alcoholic drink, but in British usage, thick, sweet port wine.

It came from an admixture of high wines and common molasses, in the proportion of one gallon of the latter to four of the spirit the seething *black strap* was pronounced ready for use PINKERTON *Molly Maguires and Detectives* ch. xvii, p. 174

**black tariff.** [U. S.] The protective tariff act of 1842, which averaged 33 per cent. in duties, and included the similitude clause by which goods resembling those specified might be also taxed

I might compromise a little, rather than see the country consigned to the tender mercies of the *black tariff* of 1842

Mr. Wick of Indiana *Speech in the House of Representatives*, July 1, 1846

**blade.** A free and easy fellow, one very much at ease in strange company, a hail fellow well met, sometimes used contemptuously

These two Baptists were topping *Blades* ELLWOOD *Autobiography* p. 143

**blanket, wet.** A discouragement, or one who discourages or throws a damper on any proceedings

I have never felt such a *wet blanket* before or since GALT *Laurie Todd* III. xiii

**Blarney.** Wheedling flattery; smooth and ready talk

—to kiss the **Blarney stone.** To become an adept at persuasive flattery from the Irish tradition that a stone in Blarney Castle, County Cork, Ireland, confers this magic power on those who kiss it. Thousands of tourists have kissed it, likewise many visitors to the Chicago World's Fair, 1892

And there's a stone there	'Tis he can clamber
Which whoever kisses,	To a lady's chamber
Sure he never misses	Or become a member
To grow eloquent	Of Parliament

FATHER PROUT *Reliques*.

**blast, in full.** In active operation, originally with reference to a blast-furnace worked to its utmost capacity.

The organ was *in full blast* in the church

HAWTHORNE *French and Italian Journals* II, 143

**blazes.** [Slang.] Used in reference to the flames of hell in forceful phrases; as, **like blazes.** Impetuously; violently.—**go to blazes!** Go to perdition, the dickens, the deuce.

What *the blazes* is in the wind now?

DICKENS *Oliver Twist* p. 91

The horse was so maddened by the wound, that he *went like blazes*

DE QUINCEY *Spanish Nun*, sect. 24

They hate each other *like blazes*

J. LAWRENCE *Guy Livingstone*.

**blaze up, to.** To flame up, as with anger; kindle with fury.

**bleed, to.** To extort money from, victimize; to milk.

You have got a bill of sale for her furniture woman enough

By Jove, Sir, you've *bled* that poor THACKERAY *Pendennis*, ch. lxviii, p. 803.

—to bleed white. [U. S.] To deprive of vitality or support, draw off, drain or exhaust, as the resources of an enterprise, or a country of its man-power

Ship Board *bled white* by "cost plus" plan *The New York Times*, Nov. 19, 1920.

**bless oneself, to.** 1. To sanctify or protect by the sign of the cross; as, they *blessed* themselves; he has not a penny to *bless* himself. 2. To account (oneself) happy; felicitate.

Fuming, *blessing himself*, dashing himself

H. SMART *Play or Pay* viii, 156

How my Lord Treasurer did *bless himself*, crying he could do no more, etc

PEPYS *Diary* April 1, 1665.

I heard that Mr. Mell was not a bad sort of a fellow, but hadn't a sixpence to *bless himself with* DICKENS *David Copperfield* I. 237.

**bless one's stars, to.** To thank oneself; to ascribe one's good fortune to luck. Ought not I to *bless my stars*? HOOD *Pauper's Christmas Carol* III.

**bless you, or me!** An exclamation of varying significance, but usually implying kindness: sometimes used ironically and euphemistically or cynically, as an imprecation or malediction.

John sneezed "God bless you" says Joan, over the bolster

BULWER LYTTON *My Novel* I, 307

**Blighly.** [British Soldiers' Slang] I. n. 1. England. 2. A wound

A blighly wound is one which sends a Tommy home to recover

*Atlantic Monthly*, Feb., 1917

## II. *adv.* To England.

In India the word *Bilayut* or *Bilayati* is found in the vernacular to stand for Europe or European and has been corrupted from the pure Urdu word *Wilyat* [By the natives of India this term is used to denote Persia, Arabia, and Great Britain] *FORBES DUT of Hindustan*, p. 771, s. v.]

W. G. TUCKER FERNANDEZ in *The New York Tribune*, Oct. 6, 1916

**blimp.** Any non-rigid balloon, whether captive or dirigible: probably a telescope word formed from *b* in "balloon" and *lump*.

English "blimps" take a hand at it (bombing), those small dirigibles, which gleam high overhead like silvered sausages

RALPH D. PAINE *Fighting Fleets*

**blind** is used in many idiomatic and some idiotic phrases, as the following:

—**a mere blind.** A subterfuge, pretense, that to which one has recourse for evasion or concealment. said to be in allusion to window-blinds which prevent outsiders from seeing into a room — **blind alley.** A dark, usually narrow, passage open only at one end, a cul-de-sac — **blind as a bat.** Unable to see — used literally and metaphorically, for, a bat is *not* blind but is merely dazed when it enters a brilliantly lighted room. This simile has been extended without logical reason to embrace also **a beetle, a mole, and an owl**, all of which can see. Some beetles, in their dawning flight, occasionally strike an object, or fly into persons, as if they could not see. Moles are not blind, but have minute eyes. Owls see better at night than in the day, hence, the idiom **blind as an owl**, when applied to a person, indicates that he can understand (or see) better at night (or in the dark) than in the day, — **blind asylum.** A home in which persons who are blind are cared for — **blind bud.** A bud that will not bloom or bear fruit — **blind drunk.** Helplessly tipsy, so intoxicated as not to be able to see — **blind lantern.** A lantern having a revolving shutter with which the light can be shaded or shut out — **blind letter.** A letter written with ink that becomes invisible — **blind man, officer or reader.** One in a post-office, who decipheres indistinct addresses — **blind manuscript.** See quotation

These fantasies we find in certain *blinde manuscripts*, without name or author, which walke underhand like the pestilence in the dark. FENTON *Usurie* p. 11

—**blind side.** The unguarded or weaker side of, also, the kinder side — **blind story.** A story lacking point or force

**blind horse, a nod's as good as a wink to a.** It is useless to make signs for those who can not or will not see; none are so blind as those who will not see; one who will not understand can not be made to do so.

A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse, and there are certain understandings in public as well as private life, which it is better for all parties not to put in writing

*Nineteenth Century* July 6, 1893

**blind, to go it.** [U. S.] To enter upon an undertaking without inquiry; act rashly or recklessly; take chances; act heedlessly.

I know that in Washington I am incomprehensible, because at the outset of the war I would not go it blind

W. T. SHEPHERD *Memoirs* I, p. 342.

Blind Poker has given rise to the very common phrase to go it blind, used whenever an enterprise is undertaken without previous inquiry

DE VERE *Americanisms* 328

**blind man's buff.** A game in which one who is blind-folded must catch and identify some one.

The whole parlor put into disorder by blindman's buff R. CHAMBERS *Essays* Ser. I 186

**blind pig or tiger.** [U. S.] A place where intoxicants are illegally sold on the sly.

**blithebread or blithemeat.** [Ir. or Scot.] Food and refreshment provided at a birth or christening.

Every day the *blithe bread* was piled in the peck for the poor of the earth

HALL CAINE

I hope, poor thing, she'll hae an easy tune o't, and that we'll hae *blithes-meat* before the sun goes down

GALT *Entail* I xxxiii 295

**blizzard.** 1. A high cold wind accompanied by blinding snow, such as frequently sweeps from the northern Rocky Mountain region in winter.

It is an old English word which describes picturesquely the English snow-blast, but is claimed as an Americanism. So far from its being American in origin, it was not till within the last thirty years, according to Bartlett and other American philologists, that it was ever heard in the Eastern States, and in the Western a *blizzard* meant a knock-down blow from an argument, not a knock-down blow from a snow-blast, and this is a common use in the midlands of England to-day. The word is a corruption of *blister* (*bltser*) and is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *blast*, a blast of wind, a burning, from *blase*, a blaze

2. A rattling volley, as of shots or of words, hence, a sudden fierce attack, a knock-down blow, any sudden and overwhelming disaster, as we were struck by a *blizzard*

**bloat.** To dry by smoke, applied chiefly to herrings. The word is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *blotan* which means to sacrifice

November was called *Blotmonath*, or slaughtering month, because the animals were then slaughtered, which were to be salted and dried for winter provision

HALLIWELL AND WRIGHT *Glossary of Allusions*, p. 86

I have four dozen fine firebrands in my belly, I have more smoke in my mouth than would *blote* a hundred herrings

BLAUMONT AND FILCHER *Island Princess* act ii

To-day *bloat* also means to swell up, so that the word has meanings directly opposed to each other: (1) smoke-dried; hence, shrunk; (2) puffed up; hence, swollen. See the next phrase.

**bloated aristocrat.** One swollen with the pride of rank or wealth.

What a *bloated aristocrat* Thingamy he has become since he got his place

THACKERAY *Adventures of Philip I*, 101

It is so easy to be a *bloated aristocrat* where it costs nothing of consequence

MARK TWAIN *Innocents Abroad* x

**block, chip of the old or same.** A child, especially a son, who resembles his father in action, likeness, attributes, etc

Edmund Burke applied the term to William Pitt, son of the Earl of Chatham, but it was used by Sanderson in 1621 and by Milton in 1642

**blockhead.** A thickheaded person; one dull of comprehension or as brainless as a woodblock or hairdresser's dummy.

Your wit will not so soon out as another man's will, 'tis strongly wedged up in a *blockhead*

SHAKESPEARE *Coriolanus* act ii, sc. 3

**blockhouse.** A detached fort built of logs and other heavy timbers blocking some strategic point. It was one or two stories high, and was loopholed and embrasured for firing.

**blood.** 1. Family descent.

God hath made of one *blood* all nations of men

Acts xvii, 26

2. The responsibility or guilt of shedding the blood of others. 3. Passion, temper; mood; disposition; anger.

High in *blood* and anger

BUCK *Richard III* ii, 61

—a *blood*. A dashing fellow, a fast or rakish young man, a buck, a gallant, also, an aristocratic rowdy

A celebrated *blood* or dandy about town was this young officer

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* p. 49

—**bad blood.** Dissension, ill-feeling, quarreling —**blood and iron.** A policy of military compulsion: the words were applied in English to Bismarck as a cognomen, from the German *Blut und Eisen*, that he himself used especially with reference to policies

concerning the German Empire that he created —**blood and thunder tales**, etc. Cheap, sensational fiction, gutter literature, penny dreadfuls, shilling shockers; low-class fiction —**blood is thicker than water**. Kinship is stronger than friendship, for water evaporates but blood does not a proverb found in Ray and other seventeenth century collections

Weel *blude's thicker than water* She's welcome to the cheeses and the hams just the same

—**blue blood**. Blood of a supposed finer or purer kind, from the idea that the veins of aristocrats were of a deeper blue than those of the common people hence, aristocratic lineage, character, or bearing

One [officer] from Spain, of high rank and birth, of the *sangre azul*, the *blue blood*

—**in cold blood**. Deliberately without passion, after calm deliberation

The taking away of human life *in cold blood*

—**in hot blood**. In the heat of anger —**one's own flesh and blood**. One's own offspring, also brothers, sisters, and other near kindred —**princes of the blood**. [Gt Brit I] Male royal relations or their descendants, as the uncles, brothers or sons of a reigning sovereign —**to freeze the blood or make the blood run cold**. To inspire with terror

I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word

Would harrow up thy soul, *freeze thy young blood*

—**to have the blood up**. To be in a passion, as, his *blood is up*, that is, he is angry

—**to make the blood or flesh creep**. To give one a sensation as of contact with creeping things, feel creepy, give one goose-flesh as through cold or fear —**to run in the blood**. To be transmitted in the blood or inherited —**the blood**. [Gt Brit I] The Royal Family sometimes qualified, *the blood royal*

**blooded stock or horses**. [U. S.] Thoroughbred animals.

A *blue-grass farm*, with *blooded horses*, etc., was my husband's ideal home

**bloody shirt, to wave**. [U. S.] To foment political party strife and sectional prejudice: from the *bloody shirts* displayed, to arouse resentment, hanging from long staves, in Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia."

The *bloody shirt* is gradually fading away In fact, the ill-feeling between the North and South would have died out years ago among the veterans of both sections, had they been left to themselves

**Bloomers**. Turkish trousers worn under a short skirt —**Bloomerism**, [U. S.] Feminist dress reform led by Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, aided by Dr. Mary Walker, 1851-1880, for which Mrs. Bloomer introduced but did not invent the costume.

I don't like the *Bloomers* any too well,—in fact, I never saw but one

She was pretty far gone in *Bloomerism*

**blowiate**. To talk boastfully, blow, brag, or talk highfalutin.

—**blowiation**. Loud, defiant, boastful talk, blowing

**blow**. [U. S.] To boast, to brag

I advise them to treat with contempt all the blasting, *blowing*, blustering, and bullying displays they may see here or elsewhere

—**blow great guns and small arms**. To blow a gale, or hurricane

Curse me if I don't think all the world means to cross the Thames this fine night One'd think it rained fares as well as *blowed great guns*

—**blow hot and cold, or blow hot and cold with the same breath**. To vacillate, to fluctuate in mind or opinion, waver, be inconsistent attributed to the fable of a traveler who blew his fingers to warm them and his broth to cool it, with the same breath —**blow in**. To visit or come in unexpectedly —**blow into one's ear**. To whisper in private



These things which malicious Roxana *blew into Statira's ears*

COTTERELL *Cassandra* iv 61

—**blow off steam.** To exhaust one's superfluous energy —**blow one's bazoo.** To blow one's own trumpet, swagger, brag From the Dutch *bazu=bazuin=trumpet*

—**blow one's own trumpet or horn.** To brag, to sound one's own praises

If you wish in this world to advance  
Your merits you're bound to enhance,  
You must stir it and stomp it,  
And *blow your own trumpet*,

Or, trust me, you haven't a chance W S GILBERT *Ruddsgore*

**blow-out.** [U. S.] 1. A feast or an entertainment; a spread. 2. A puncture, as of an automobile tire

(1) Get us hot water, and sugar, and cigars, and plenty of the real stuff, and we'll have a *blow out* HARRIETT BEECHER STOWE *Uncle Tom's Cabin* viii

**blow over.** To pass away, as a storm after spending its force, go by without bad result; be dissipated, dropped or forgotten; as, the trouble will *blow over* originally alluding to a sand-storm.

A young man who had been troubling society with impalpable doctrines of a new civilization which he called "the Kingdom of Heaven" had been put out of the way, and I can imagine [some] believer in material power murmuring as he went homeward, "It will all *blow over* now" Yes, the Kingdom of Heaven has *blown over* the world.

GEORGE W. RUSSELL *The Economics of Ireland* p 23

When the storm is *blown over*, they will return to their old bias again

J FOSBROKE *England's Warning* 25.

**blow sky-high.** To scold severely, to rate with energy See BLOW-UP.

**blow the coals or the fire.** To promote strife, to fan the flames of discord.

The Chancellor had also helped to *blow the fire*

COTTON *Espernon* II, vii, 309

**blow the gaff.** To peach, inform on, expose, betray.

One of the French officers, after he was taken prisoner, asked me how we had managed to set the gun up there, but I wasn't going to *blow the gaff*

MARRYAT *Peter Simple* XIII

**blow up, or out.** 1. To inflate, as a bladder 2. To burst and scatter or destroy by explosion 3. To fan, produce, or develop, as, to *blow up* a fire or strife. 4. [Colloq.] To scold, as, to *blow up* a careless servant. 5. To cause by blowing, as, to *blow up* a storm. 6. To puff up; to inflate with pride or egotism

(3) Some trifling accident *blew up* their discontent into a furious mutiny

GIBBON *Decline and Fall* I, v.

(4) The captain was too "wide-awake" for him, and beginning upon him at once, gave him a grand *blow up*, R H DANA *Two Tears Before the Mast*.

(6) Because a man has *blown himself out* like a bladder JOWETT *Plato* III, 38

**blow upon.** 1. To impair the value of, render unsavory; as his reputation had not yet been *blown upon*. 2. To inform against; as to *blow upon* a confederate.

(1) Then Sir Gawaine made many men to *blow upon* Sir Launcelot, and all at once they called him "False, recreant knight" MALORY *Arthur* II 438

(2) They got word the plot was "*blown upon*" by some traitor

A M SULLIVAN *New Ireland* xxiii, 276

**blower.** A boastful fellow; braggart; boaster; gas-bag; wind-bag.

Gen Grant is not one of our *blower* generals

MANHATTAN in *Evening Standard*, Dec 10, 1863.

**blubber-head.** 1. A cry-baby. 2. An empty-headed person, a fool.

**blue (a).** Suggestive; offensive; indecent; obscene perhaps from the fact that blue was the color of the garb worn by prostitutes in the house of correction.

**blue** (*n*) or **bluestocking**. A learned woman, or one affecting literary tastes, one who is pedantic and undomestic. It was applied in 1653 to the Little or Barebone Parliament, and about 1750 to London literary assemblies where Benjamin Stillingfleet and many eminent persons appeared in the *blue* and undress hose of the day.

*Blue* was a colour appropriated to the dresses of particular persons in low life. It was the usual habit of servants, but was adopted by the gentry about 1600.

HALLIWELL AND WHIGHT *Glossary*, p. 88.

You proud varlets, you need not be ashamed to wear *blue* when your master is one of your fellows.

*Old Plays*, iii, 389.

The *Blues*, that tender tribe, who sigh o'er sonnets.

BYRON *Don Juan* XI, 50.

I have an utter aversion to *blue-stockings*. I do not care a fig for any woman that knows even what an author means.

HALLIET *Table Talk* II 7.

**Blue and the Gray, the**. The armies of the Northern and of the Southern States in the American Civil War (1861-1865): from the predominating colors of the uniforms worn by the troops.

Under the sod and the dew,

Waiting the Judgment Day,

Love and tears for the *Blue*,

Tears and love for the *Gray*.

FRANCIS FINCH *The Blue and the Gray*

**blueback**. Paper-money of the Confederate States of America, and also of the Orange Free State—so called from the color of the back.

The name of *bluebacks* was soon exchanged for the slang term of shacks.

DE VREE *Americanisms* 291.

The *bluebacks*, as the Orange Free State banknotes were called.

TROLLOPE *South Africa* II, 206.

**blue book**. 1. [Gt. Brit.] A volume or pamphlet containing reports of government officials printed primarily for the information of Parliament and issued in blue paper-covers. 2. [U. S.] Popularly, a register containing the names, addresses, etc., of persons in the employ of the Government, also, a classified register of names, as of persons in society.

(1) The second of these books is called the *blue book*, so called, it being bound in blue velvet, it begins with the first year of Queen Mary.

ASHMOLE *Hist. Order Garter* VI, 155.

**blue-bottle**. A term of reproach for a servant, also, applied to parish beadle.

I will have you as soundly swung for this, you *blue-bottle* rogue.

SHAKESPEARE *II Henry IV* act v, sc. 4.

**bluecoat** 1. A soldier or policeman; also, any person who wears a blue uniform. 2. [Gt. Brit.] A pupil of Christ's Hospital, London: so called from the school uniform, a long blue woolen gown.

**Blue Devils**. 1. Chasseurs Alpins: French soldiers so-called during the World War, from their dashing attack and blue uniforms. 2. [b-d-] In earlier use, great depression of spirits; despondency; morbid melancholy; hypochondria; delirium tremens.

There are *blue devils* which defy blue pills.

PLANCHÉ *King Christmas*

It was just the weather to give drunkards the *blue devils*.

CORBETT *Resid. U. S.* 42.

**blue funk**. Nervous apprehension or agitation, panic, frightened suspense.

Isn't this better than lyin' up just behind the coll,—in a *blue funk* everytime we had a smoke?

KIPLING *Stalky & Co.* p. 16.

**Blue Grass State**. Kentucky: so called from the luxuriance with which blue-grass (*Poa pratensis*) flourishes in its limestone pastures.

**Blue Hen State.** Delaware. Captain Caldwell of Delaware, an officer of the Revolution, said no cock could be truly game unless he had a *blue hen* for his mother, hence, arose the rebuke to one given to boasting of his descent, "Your mother was a *blue hen*, no doubt."

Yes Sir, the *blue hen's* chickens, the descendants of the cocks which crowed and fought so bravely in the times which tried men's souls and game ones at that

MR CULLEN of Delaware. *Speech* in House of Representatives, July 12, 1856

**blue in the face.** Aghast as with amazement or fear

**blue-laws.** [U. S.] Severe Puritanic laws, regulating Sabbath observance and personal habits; said to have been enacted in New Haven, Conn., in early Colonial days, hence, any laws of exceptionally drastic character. The phrase is variously explained as due to the blue cover in which the laws were bound, and with more probability, to the use of "blue," as an epithet of derision by English Royalists, as in BULLER'S *Hudibras*, (canto 1)

For his religion it was fit  
To match his learning and his wit,  
'Twas Presbyterian true blue

I know that Connecticut, in the olden time, was libeled by a Tory renegade, who absconded to England to perpetrate his vindictive falsehood, as the *Blue Law State*

MR GILLETT of Conn., *Speech* in the U. S. Senate, July 6, 1854

Connecticut in her *blue-laws*, laying it down as a principle, that the laws of God should be the law of the land. THOMAS JEFFERSON *Letter* to JOHN ADAMS Jan. 24, 1814

**blue, men in.** Policemen, constables, firemen, sailors, soldiers, and others wearing a blue uniform. Compare BLUECOAT.

**blue Monday.** 1. [Gt Brit.] (1) The Monday before Lent. (2) The second Monday after any great horse-race, when settlements are in order at Tattersalls. 2. [U. S.] Monday as a day of toil as opposed to Sunday, a day of rest, also, any time or occasion when the spirits are depressed.

St. Crispin's day. This is the German *der blaue Montag*. Not Oct. 25, but holiday Monday, the day of blue books. BREWER *Historic Note-Book*

**blue moon, once in a.** Very seldom; used formerly to designate something that will never happen, as, "once in a month of Sundays," yet Brewer in "Phrase and Fable," p. 151, says "On December 10, 1883, we had a *blue moon*. The winter was unusually mild."

If they say the *moon is blue*,  
We must believe that it is true

ROY and BARLOW *Rede me and Be nott Wroth*, p. 114

**blue moonshine.** Capricious nonsense, whimsicality, twaddle, bosh

**blue murder, to shout.** To make a great outcry, show more alarm than is warranted by the occasion.

**blue nose.** [Colloq.] A Nova-Scotian: because of the inference that the climate of Nova Scotia is so cold that it makes the nose blue; hence, a Nova Scotian fishing-boat, variety of potato, etc.

**blue pencil.** To edit, and especially to shorten or condense.

The actor will have a better chance after the *blue pencil* has eliminated the unnecessary verbiage in the dialogue. *The Daily News* London, Feb. 17, 1889

**blue peter.** 1. A blue flag with white square, run up the foremast of a merchant-ship as a signal that the vessel is ready to sail, to recall the crew and others.

They were looking their very best, yards squared, rigging taut and trim, bunting flying gaily in the autumn breeze, the *blue peter* at the fore

H. L. WEBB in *Electricity in Daily Life*, p. 179

2. In whist, to play a higher card than is needed, as a signal for trumps.

Since the introduction of *blue peter* the necessity of leading through your adversary's hand has become less and less BEETON'S *Handy Book of Games* 358

**blue pig.** Whisky so-called in Maine and in Liverpool, England.

**blue ribbon.** 1. The badge of the Order of the Garter. 2. A badge indicating the first competitive prize; figuratively, a prize; honor. 3. The badge used by temperance societies.

(1) Rising to thunderous denunciations of the "noble lord in the *blue ribbon*."

MORLEY Burke 56

(2) "You do not know what the Derby is!" "Yes I do. It is the *blue ribbon* of the turf."

DISRAELI *Harper's Magazine* Aug. 1883

**blue ruin.** Gin.

**blue-sky laws.** [U. S.] Laws enacted in Kansas in 1911, and later by other States, to regulate the sale of stocks and bonds by corporations, etc., to the public, to prevent fraud. So called from the claim by their projector that "to capitalize the blue skies" was the object of some promoters.

The public's loss was estimated at \$500,000,000 a year by Charles J. Andre, Secretary of the National Association of Securities Commissioners. Mr. Andre said that about 10 per cent. of the stock offered to the public was worthless, and that although thirty-eight States have *blue-sky laws* some are so loose that practically everything gets through.

*Associated Press Telegram*, Oct. 8, 1920

**blue, to look.** To appear to be depressed in spirits.

She looked a bit *blue* to-night, as girls will look, in fact her face always has a tinge of sadness about it.

ELIZABETH S. PHELPS *Gates Ajay* p. 207

**blue, to make the air.** To curse or swear; to use obscene language.

**Blue Triangle.** The symbol of the Young Women's Christian Association as used in the World War.

At the base hospitals I visited the huts for American nurses, where the *Blue Triangle* means all the refinements and seclusion and respite which the splendid band of nurses has been accustomed to at home.

J. H. ODELL *Atlantic Monthly* Nov. 1918

**blue, true.** Reliable, staunch; loyal, trustworthy.

**blue will never stain, true.** An upright man will never do wrong.

**Blues, the.** 1. [Gt. Brit.] The Royal Horse Guards. 2. [b-] Depression of spirit; as, he had *the blues* all day.

**blues, in the.** Low spirited, depressed. Compare BLUE DEVILS.

**bluff, to.** To assume a bold front so as the deceive or mislead an opponent from the practise in poker of betting heavily on a weak hand so as to lead one's opponents to believe it is very strong, and thus cause them to throw up their cards and forfeit the stakes.

**bluff, to call a.** To compel an opponent to show his hand, or to reveal the facts of a matter under discussion.

**bluffer.** One who habitually shows a disposition to intimidate, as by boastful assurance, for the purpose of deceiving or daunting an opponent.

**blush, at or on first.** At the first sudden glance; when first seen hastily; without due or careful consideration.

His Grace is . . . able at the first *blush* to discern truth from falsehood

STUBBS *Anat. Abus.* 117

**blush, to put to the.** To cause one to blush from embarrassment; put to shame or confusion.

**blushet.** One given to blushing; a shy little maiden.

**bo to a goose, he can't say bo (boh or boo).** He is so timid that he can not drive geese away. See Introduction, page vi.

**board, on.** On or in a train, ship, or other conveyance

**board round.** [U. S.] To live in various households of a community in rotation, as was done formerly by masters of country schools

Great is the parade, and great the preparations, by each family, when their "week of boarding the master" comes round

SEBA SMITH *Way Down East* 76

**board, to.** To provide food or food and lodging for, live at the board or table of.

**board, to go by the.** To be carried away over a ship's side, to go overboard; hence, to go for good and all, to be completely done with and thrown over.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,  
With the mast, went by the board

LONGFELLOW *Wreck of the Hesperus*, xix

A class of grammatical distinctions which have gone by the board

WHITNEY *Life Long* vi, 103.

**board, to sweep the.** To take everything that there is to take from the winning of all the stakes in a game at cards

**boards, to be on the.** 1. To follow the theatrical profession; be on the stage of a theater

Some new English ballet happened to be on the boards

ALDRICH *Queen of Sheba* p 28

2. To be under consideration

**boat, to have an oar in another's.** To interfere in another's affairs; to play the busybody.

Meddlers that will have an Oar in every Boat

R. LEFRANCE *Visions of Quevedo* 3

**boat, to rock the.** [U. S.] To disturb the equilibrium, cause a disturbance, spoil one's chances, endanger one's safety

**boat, to row, sail, or be in the same.** To be in the same position and subject to the consequences.

"But my face is all muddy," argued Tom "Oh! we're all in the same boat, for that matter"

HUGHES *Tom Brown* 131

**boat, to sail one's own.** [U. S.] To manage one's own affairs; be self-reliant; to paddle one's own canoe

**bob.** (n) [Gt Brit] 1. A shilling. 2. A taunt

(1) Will you take three bob?

DICKENS *Pickwick Papers* 351

"Bob" is thought to have first distinguished the shilling in Sir Robert Walpole's time

*The Athenaeum*, London, 1864, p 558

**bob.** (v.) To cut short, as the hair of the head or the tail of a horse

**bob, to give one the.** To impose upon, deceive, cheat, deride, make a fool of.

C. I guess the business

S. It can be no other

But to give me the bob, that being a matter

Of main importance

MASSINGER *Maid of Honour* act iv sc 5

**bobbish or pretty bobbish.** Well, hearty, in good health and spirits.

I didn't suppose it would be very polite, under the circumstances, to go round looking as bobbish as I feel

HOWELLS *Dr Breen's Practice* vii

I trust you will find me pretty bobbish

SCOTT in *Lockhart's Life* xlv 394

**Boche.** [Fr.] 1. A bloodthirsty revolutionist 2. A German soldier

Used by Zola in "La Débâcle," and prior to 1870 as an equivalent of "blockhead," a dull-witted stupid person Perhaps from Simon Caboché, Parisian butcher and revolutionary leader, notorious for atrocities in France during the 15th century

Boche, noun and adjective, abbreviation of *Alboche*, "German" Popular synonym for German The final -che is frequent in French argot The b of this new suffix boche indicates analogy with *caboche*

Boche has become, like the Alsatian "Swab," the synonym for an impostor, liar, drunkard, and infamously cruel barbarian

GENERAL ZURLINDEN in *Larousse Mensuel* No 94, Dec 1914, p 293

**bodkin, to ride, sit or travel.** To sit, as a third person, squeezed in between two others, in the middle of a carriage only wide enough for two.

The writer supposes Aubrey to come to town in postchaise and pair, *sitting bodkin* probably between his wife and sister. THACKERAY *Book of Snobs* XXXIV

**body and soul together, to keep.** To preserve or maintain life.

**body-snatcher.** 1. [U. S.] A grave-robber or resurrectionist. 2. [Gt. Brit.] A bailiff, Bow-street runner, or policeman.

**bog-orange.** A potato.

**bog-trotter.** One who trots over a bog or bogs, hence, a traveler a nickname for an Irish peasant, and, formerly, for Scottish or North country borderers, moss-troopers, or highwaymen

**bogus.** Spurious, sham, fictitious. According to Sir James A. H. Murray, related to *bogy*, a "goblin," "scarecrow." Many other theories have been advanced, but the Welsh *bygyllus*, "intimidating, scaring," from *bug*, has been overlooked. The word is used of currency (**bogus currency**) which is counterfeit and transactions (**bogus transactions**) that are fraudulent.

**Bohemia.** A community of Bohemians or the district where they live. In New York supposed to be Greenwich Village, in London, Old Chelsea; and in Paris, the north bank of the Seine or Montmartre

In persons open to the suspicion of irregular and immoral living—in *Bohemia*

EMERSON *Letters and Social Aims* X 256

**Bohemian.** An artist or a litterateur who consciously or unconsciously secedes from conventionality in life and in art. In the United States, used to designate artists, literary men, or actors, who lead a free, vagabondish or irregular life, not being particular as to the society frequented, and despising conventionalities in general.

There are many blackguards who are *Bohemians*, but it does not follow that all *Bohemians* are blackguards. Cornhill Magazine Feb., 1865.

**boil down.** To reduce in bulk, to condense or epitomize

To *boil down* columns of narrative into a few lines of bald, cold statement

HAROLD FRODLICK in *Scribner's Magazine* I 479, 1887.

**boil the pot.** To supply one's livelihood, to make sure of bread and butter, by the production of **pot-boilers**, as pictures, paintings, poems, stories, etc., that provide the means to purchase the necessities of life.

I think this piece will help *to boil the pot*

WOLCOTT *Peep at Royal Acad* V 352

Used also as **to keep the pot boiling**, to supply the means of continuance or of sustenance.

**boiled dinner.** [U. S.] Meat and vegetables, as corned beef, potatoes, turnips and carrots cooked together in New England style.

**boiled shirt.** A white shirt of linen with starched front, which is usually boiled in cleansing, and afterwards starched.

**boiling point, at the.** Excessively angry.

**bold as brass.** Shameless; impudent; unblushing.

**bold, or so bold, to make.** To take the liberty to; presume so far as to (*ask, do or say something*).

**bold with, to make.** To make free with; take liberties.

**boll.** To swell to the point of bursting as a seed-pod. See *Exodus* ix, 31.

**Bolsheviki.** [Rus.] Literally, "the greater." Specifically, the terroristic

branch of the Social Democratic Party that became dominant in Russia during the revolution of March, 1917. So called because, being the larger group, they were "Members of the majority" as opposed to the *Mensheviks*, or "members of the minority." This name was taken by the extreme Russian radicals under the leadership of Lenin, when the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party split at its Convention in 1903. *Bolsheviks* is derived from the Russian *bolshinstvo*, which means "the majority."

The *Bolsheviks* are the extremists of socialism.

HAMILTON HOLT in *The Independent* Dec. 14, 1918

**bolt, to.** [U. S.] 1. To repudiate the platform or candidates of the party with which one has been identified, as when Theodore Roosevelt bolted the Republican Convention at Chicago, in 1912 and organized the Progressive Party. 2. To swallow whole, to gulp down. 3. To move hurriedly. 4. To sift flour.

(1) Fellows who *bolt* the party and support the opposition candidate when they cannot control the nomination. *Inter-Ocean*, Chicago, Feb. 3, 1888

(2) Dyspeptic individuals *bolting* their food in wedges. *Dickens* *Martin Chuzzlewit* XVI

—**to bolt to the bran.** To investigate minutely, so as to sift the good from the bad

**Bombay-ducks.** 1. An officer of the Bombay civil service. 2. A fish.

The *Bombay-duck* is the Anglo-English relation of the Digby chick. Alive, it is a fish called the bummelo, dead and dried it becomes a duck.

G. A. SALA, in *Illustrated London News*, Aug. 7, 1886

**bona fide.** [L.] In good faith; without deceit; used in English as a compound adjective; as, *bona-fide* transactions.

**bonanza.** [U. S.] A profitable investment, lucky strike, stroke of fortune; success. From the Spanish *bonanza*, prosperity; success. Used as a name for the *Bonanza* Mine in Nevada, which proved very valuable.

A *bonanza* with millions in it, is not struck every week. *Scribner's Magazine*, July, 1875

**bone, bred in the.** Inherited, natural, inborn

**bone dry.** Absolutely dry, dry as the bones referred to in *Jeremiah* viii. Used specifically of districts in the United States where prohibition of the liquor traffic is strictly enforced as contrasted with the partially dry districts under local option.

**bone in the arm, to have a.** To be unable or unwilling to do something requiring manual effort. used humorously as an excuse.

**bone in the leg, to have a.** To be unable or unwilling to move, take a walk, or make some other effort in which one's legs must be used: a polite but playful refusal.

Besides, I can't go, for I have a *bone in my leg*.

SWIFT *Polite Conversations* 3

**bone in the throat, to have a.** To decline to answer a question, be unable or unwilling to talk.

He refused to speak, alleging that he had a *bone in this throat*, and he could not speak.

UDALL'S TRANS. ERASMUS'S *Apophthegms*,

**bone of contention, discord, or dissension.** A subject of contention, discord, or quarrel; anything that produces wrangling and conflict.

**bone, one is pretty sure to be.** A reality that is not equal to the ideal; all is not gold that glitters.

Many people (here in the West) have to get up and get in order to make both ends meet, and even then one end is *pretty sure to be bone*. *The World*, London, May 13, 1888

**bone, to pick a or to have a bone to pick with.** 1. A controversy to settle; a cause of disagreement. 2. To have a disagreement or cause of complaint to adjust.

A *bone* for you to *pick* on

COLFILL *Answer Treat Cron* 277 (1565)

Many a "*bone*" in these lectures which a keen metaphysician would be disposed to "*pick*" with the author

H. ROGERS *Essays* II. n

**bones of, to make no.** To make no difficulty about, have no scruples in; offer no opposition to.

**boob, booby.** 1. A dull, stupid, or awkward fellow.

His master served such a *booby* rightly in turning him out of doors

HOLMES *Audocrat* ch 3, p 56

2. The boy at the foot of the class, the dunce 3. In some games, as progressive card-games, the person who makes the poorest score. 4. A swimming bird, as the gannet of the coasts of tropical and subtropical America named from its apparent stupidity. Also, a penguin; a ruddy-duck.

**boodle.** [U. S.] Illegal gain or profit, graft See quotation.

The best man in the world cannot make an honest living by being a City Councilman The office is an unsalaried one, and any money that is made out of it is *boodle* This is a new term for plunder, fraud and every form of stealing that can be practiced by office holders, who, in the practice, add the crime of perjury

*The Bulletin*, Philadelphia, Feb 24, 1888

**book, does not suit my.** Does not fit in with my plans.

**book it, to.** To charge or note in a book, as a sale.

**Book of Books, the.** The Bible.

**book, to bring to.** To call to account, demand an account from, bring to terms

No delay in this court both parties, through their advocates are now brought to book

CARLYLE *Frederick*, vol V p 280

**book, to make a.** [Sport.] To receive bets against all entries in a race, to bank in gambling transactions

**book, to say off the.** To recite from memory; repeat

**book, to speak by the.** To state according to the facts or the records.

**book, to speak or talk like a.** To speak precisely and accurately or as one having authority.

**booked.** Disposed of, engaged, caught. Frequently used in such phrases as, "his passage is *booked*," he has reserved transportation; "the prisoner is *booked* for a long term," sentenced to many years' imprisonment.

**books, to be in one's good, bad or black.** To be in favor or out of favor with one.

**books, to be out of one's.** To be out of favor with one.

**boom.** [U. S.] To advertise extensively; create a demand for; promote by puffing in advance; hence, **boomer**, one who *booms*, and **booming**, restoring activity and prosperity.

There's \$200,000 coming, and that will set things *booming* again

MARK TWAIN *Gilded Age*, xxvii

**boomerang.** Any proceeding that recoils upon the originator.

Like the strange weapon, which the Australian throws,  
Your verbal boomerang slaps you on the nose

HOLMES *Modest Request*, 42

**boost.** [U. S.] To aid as by giving a helping hand to or recommending highly, hoist, lift up.

A genius took hold of the business and gave it a *boost*

*Puck's Library*, May 10, 1888.

**boot.** An instrument of torture by which the legs were crushed.



**boot, give that to.** Give in addition or as gratuitous compensation  
**boot is on the other leg, the.** The responsibility is on the other side, the case is altered.

**bootleg.** [U. S. Colloq.] To sell liquor against the law, originally, to peddle liquor unlawfully on an Indian reservation; so called from the practise of carrying a flask in the leg of a boot. Hence **bootlegger**. A person who violates the prohibition laws

**boot of, make.** Profit by, gain advantage through. See quotation under ATTIC BEE.

**boots.** [Gt. Brit.] A hotel porter or attendant who shines shoes, etc.

**boots or shoes, to die in one's.** To be hanged, or to die suddenly or by violence.

Whoever refused to do this should presently swing for it, and *die in his shoes*

RABELAIS *Books IV. xiv.*, URQUHART'S *trans*

**boots on, to die with one's.** To die while actively engaged in business

**boots; over shoes, over.** Reckless continuance in a course begun.

*Over shoes, over boots*, I know God will never forgive me, and therefore I never will trouble myself to seek his favor

SANDERSON *Sermons II* 241

**booze, bouse, or bowse.** To drink heavily; carouse, tipple, guzzle. In good use in the 14th century, now vulgar.

*Boozed in their tavern dens*

The scurril Press drove all their dirty pens

P CROOK *War of Hats* 50

**born days, in one's.** In one's lifetime.

He never was so delighted in his *born days*

RICHARDSON *Pamela III*, 383

**born in the purple.** Born in affluence

**born on the wrong side of the blanket.** Of illegitimate birth.

**born with a silver spoon in one's mouth.** Born in luxury, or to luck or wealth.

**born yesterday, not.** Not to be imposed upon, familiar with the ways of the world.

**borne in upon one.** Impressed on one's mind. See BEAR IN MIND.

It is *borne in upon* the many

as self evident, that religious men would not thus

be jealous

J H NEWMAN *Disc Univ Educ* 103

**bosh.** Nonsense; absurd or foolish talk: from a Turkish word signifying, "empty, vain; devoid of sense."

**bosom friend.** Most intimate and cherished friend, as close as if held to the bosom, confidential friend

The secrets of the breast unfolded to a *bosom friend*

SHAFTESBURY *Inquiry Concerning Virtue II* 11

**boss.** A master or employer. Often used as a familiar and affectionate form of address in the United States. Also, the leader of a political group, often derogatively; as, *Boss Tweed* of New York.

Our tight little island does not produce railway *bosses* of the masterful American type

*Free Lance*, London, April 27, 1901

**Botany Bay.** A bay and landing-place on the coast of New South Wales, S. of Sydney, Australia; formerly a British convict station. Hence

**Botany Bay fever**, transportation, penal servitude.

The famished wretch is sent to the whipping-post or to *Botany Bay*

*The Examiner*, London, Oct 19, 1912

**bottle.** Drink.—to take to the bottle. To drink to excess

**bottle of hay, to look for a needle in a.** To attempt to do something that is very difficult or to seek something that it is impossible to find.

A child is as lost about London streets . . . as a needle in a bottle of hay  
HOOD *Lost Heart* II

**bottle, to turn out no.** [Brit. Sport] To fail, to turn out badly.

**bottom, at.** Fundamentally, essentially.

It is bad, it is at *bottom*, a superstition

MORLEY *Roussseau* II 171

**bottom dollar.** Last money

You bet your *bottom dollar* I'm open to criticism myself

W. N. HARBEN *The Georgians*, p. 43

**bottom of, to be at the.** To be the principal cause or author of. now usually of mischief or rascality.

Pride is at the *bottom* of all great mistakes

ROSKIN *True and Beautiful*, p. 426

**bottom of, to get at the.** To ascertain all the facts concerning

**bottom to it, there's no.** It is unfathomable, it can not be understood.

**bottom, to stand on one's own.** To act independently.

**bottom, to touch.** To arrive at a conclusion, understand.

**bought and sold, or bought, sold, and done for.** Ruined beyond hope of recovery; done for

Mad as a buck to be so *bought and sold* SHAKESPEARE *Comedy of Errors* act III, sc. 1

**bounce, to or to get the grand.** [U. S.] To dismiss or be dismissed, or thrown out of office or position.

Speaker Carlisle has *bounced* his clerk for telling tales out of school

*Boston Journal*, Oct. 3, 1884

**bouncer. 1.** A barefaced falsehood. **2.** One who throws out an objectionable person.

**bounty jumper.** [U. S.] One who enlisted in the Union army during the American Civil War, and having collected the large bounty then paid, deserted in order to repeat the process in some other locality.

**Bourbon.** [U. S.] A stubborn conservative; one opposed to progress; especially applied, before and during the Civil War, as a nickname to certain Democrats, as being, like the Bourbon family, behind the times and unteachable. Hence, **Bourbon Democrat.** a reactionary Democrat or "fire-eater"

It may be said of the Southern *Bourbon* of the Legislature that he comports himself with a dignity, a reserve and a decorum, that command admiration

PIKE *The Prostrate State* 13

**bow at a venture, to draw.** To shoot without seeing the mark, or act without foreseeing the result, at hazard, at random

A certain man *drew his bow at a venture*, and smote the King of Israel

*I Kings* xxii, 34

**bow, to draw the long.** To exaggerate; to lie.

Then he went into a lot of particulars, and I began to think he was *drawing the long bow*

W. D. HOWELLS

**bow up to the ear, to draw the.** To exert full force, to act with energy and alacrity.

So Miller, the coxswain, took to *drawing the bow up to the ear at once*

*Macmillan's Magazine*, Feb., 1860

**bow, to have two strings, or a second string, or more than one string to one's.** To have more than one resource, opportunity, or way.

As he that hath *two strings to his bow*,

And burns for love and money too

BUTLER *Hudibras* III i, 3

**bow, to shoot in another's.** To work on an undertaking or in a profession not one's own.

**bowdlerize.** To expurgate after the method of Dr. Thomas Bowdler, who said of his edition of Shakespeare "Those expressions are omitted which can not with propriety be read aloud in the family."

No profane hand shall dare, for me, to curtail my Chaucer, to *Bowdlerize* my Shakespeare, or mutilate my Milton

*Notes and Queries* Ser 4 vi 41

**bow the knee.** To kneel in adoration; hence, to submit to without reservation

Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the *knees* which have not *bowed unto Baal*

*I Kings*, xix 18

**bowels of compassion, mercy, pity, etc.** Sympathy or compassion, pity

And at least it would be a face worth seeing—the face of a man who was without *bowels of mercy*

R. L. STEVENSON *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* I

It has none of the yearnings of the *bowels of tenderness*

MORLEY *Roussseau* II 218 Note

Upon the bare suggestion and *bowels of pity*

SIR T. BROWNE *Reliq Med* II ¶ 2

**bowie-knife.** [U. S.] A long, two-edged, pointed hunting-knife with hilt protected by a cross-piece—*invented* by Rezin P. Bowie but erroneously attributed to James Bowie.

I took the precaution of bringing my *bowie* and revolver with me in case the worst came to the worst

KINGSLEY *Alton Locke* XXVII

**bowled out, over or down.** Disconcerted, put out of commission; knocked over. Derived from terms used in the game of cricket

He's handsomer than you are, if you don't mind your play, he'll *bowle you out*

J. E. SMEDLEY *Louis Arundel* XXIV

I sent in a zinc bullet close to the ear, which *bowled it* (the rhinoceros) *over* dead

STANLEY *Through the Dark* Cont II 261

**bowler hat.** Low dome-crowned stiff felt hat, a billycock; called, in the United States a *derby*.

**box Harry, to.** [Brit.] To economize by missing a regular meal, as dinner, and taking something substantial at tea-time—used by commercial travelers.

**box, in a, or in a tight box.** [Colloq.] In a difficult situation; in a fix; in a corner.

**box the compass, to.** To recite in consecutive order the 32 points of the compass, hence, to adopt successively all possible opinions on a question.

The wind would regularly *box the compass* . . . in the course of every day, following where the sun should be

BLACKMORE *Lorna Doone* xliii

**boycott.** 1. To injure by refusing to deal or associate with a person or organization: a method of attack in political or labor conflicts first practised by Land-Leaguers in Ireland—*from* Capt. *Boycott*, first notable victim in the system. 2. To put pressure upon to induce conformity to public opinion, to punish by ostracism for a violation of public sentiment. 3. To refrain from the use of; as, Will Japan *boycott* American goods?

On Sept. 19, 1880, Mr. Parnell formulated the law of *boycotting* in the town of Ennis, county Clare

*The Times*, London, Feb. 2, 1886

The lineal ancestors of the Land League *boycotted* the poet

*Quarterly Review*, 1881, p. 117

**bracer.** [U. S.] A stimulant; an antifogmatic; a pick-me-up.

**brainstorm.** [U. S.] Cerebral disturbance of a sudden and violent char-

acter; impulsive insanity. Used by counsel for the defense in the trial of Harry K. Thaw for the murder of Stanford White in 1906.

**brand-new.** Quite new. formerly used only of things made from metal, now used indiscriminately.

**brass.** Barefaced impudence; effrontery; unblushingness.—**bold as brass.** Brazenly; shamelessly.

"He came in as bold as brass," said Frederick THACKERAY *Vanity Fair*, II 12

**brass farthing.** A debased coin of James II's time; hence, **I don't care a brass farthing.** I am absolutely indifferent or care nothing about the matter.

*I care not one brass farthing*

BESANT AND RICE *Scamy Side* X 78

**brazen it out.** To show no shame, to persist with effrontery

He would talk saucily, live and brazen it out

ARBUTHNOT *John Bull*, 86

**bread-and-butter.** a. 1. Actuated by need, mercenary, as, a *bread-and-butter* candidate. 2. Unsophisticated, immature; youthful, as, a *bread-and-butter* miss —**bread and butter.** Income; means of subsistence.

Young man, your *bread and butter* is cut for life

SWISS *Life Id Eldon* I VI 119

Journalists who frankly avow what is called the *bread and butter* theory of their craft

*Contemporary Review*, May, 1886

**bread and butter, to quarrel with one's.** To give up one's means of livelihood.

If they push it to that, they will have quarrelled with their *bread and butter*

JEFFERSON *Letter to Mr Pinckney*, Sept 30, 1820

**bread and cheese.** Homely fare, bare necessities in food

I love not the humor of *bread and cheese*

SHAKESPEARE *Merry Wives of Windsor* act, 11 sc 1

**bread and salt, swear by.** To take a binding oath, hence **to eat or take bread and salt**, to solemnly swear. Perhaps from the covenant of salt (*Numbers* xviii, 19) that could not be broken.

No wight save she, *by bred and salt*

SHAKESPEARE *Henry V* act v, sc 2

I have eaten your *bread and salt*,

I have drunk your water and wine

RUDYARD KIPLING *Departmental Duties*

**bread and scrape.** [Brit.] Bread thinly buttered; short commons

Some people have their happiness thinly spread over their whole lives, like *bread and scrape!*

BROUGHTON *Nancy* xlvii

**bread is buttered, to know on which side one's.** To know where one's interest lies.

**bread out of one's mouth, to take the.** To deprive one of earning his livelihood; to forestall another.

**bread, to break.** To take a meal; enjoy hospitality; as, I have *broken bread* with them.

Not all who *break his bread* are true

BYRON *Bride of Abydos* II, xvi

**break. n.** A blunder.—**to make a bad break.** To violate a confidence or the rules of propriety.

**break. v.** To fail, go bankrupt.

**break a lance with.** To compete with; to try conclusions.

**break a straw with.** To quarrel; to fall out with.

**break down.** 1. To come to grief or to disable by breaking. 2. To lose one's health or strength. 3. To fail in a undertaking. 4. To give way to grief or other emotion.

- (1) They would be powerful to *break down*, helpless to build up  
J H NEWMAN *Hist Sketches* I, i 1, 9  
(2) The mind may *break down* all at once under some sudden infliction  
SIR B BRODIE *Psychol Inq* I iii 93

**break gently.** To make known in a gentle and kindly way.

**break ground.** To begin excavating for a house or a railroad; to initiate some new project, take the first steps, act as pioneer.

We hear the French are *breaking ground*, as if they intended a formal siege  
*London Gazette* No 1320 (1678)

**break in.** 1. To train, as a horse. 2. To force violently in, open, or apart, to feloniously trespass and enter, as a burglar

(1) Savages who had not *broken in* a single animal to labour MACAULAY *Chloe* 3

**break in upon.** To intrude upon abruptly, interrupt

I am afraid . . . I *break in upon* you abruptly FIELDING *Tom Jones* XV, v

**break in the market.** A sudden decline of prices in the stock market.

**break off with or from.** To part with, abandon, hence, cut, as an acquaintance. See **BREAK WITH**.

**break Priscian's head.** To violate the laws of grammar.

Does Shakespeare never *break Priscian's head*?  
*The Daily Telegraph*, London, July 10, 1883

**break shins.** To borrow money.

**break the back.** To be overburdened, bankrupt. 2. To overcome the chief obstacle or principal difficulty

They are very poor and have made a hard fight to get on I fear this change would *break their backs*  
BARING GOULD *The Gamecocks* XXVIII

**break the ice.** To overcome the restraints of a first intercourse between strangers.

I availed myself of a pause in the conversation to *break the ice* in relation to the topic which lay nearest my heart  
H ROGERS *Edt Faith* 28

**break the neck of.** To accomplish the greater part of a task or journey; be nearing the end, in older usage, to disconcert.

**break the news, matter, or secret.** To make known; disclose cautiously and delicately.

With a mind to *break the matter* gently to his partner ARBUTHNOT *John Bull* 102  
Now however, I have some *news to break* HOOD *Up the Rhine* 1  
Here it may be resolved that she shall *break the secret* of this marriage to the old Earl  
G COLEMAN in *G Coleman the Younger's Letters* 339

**break up.** 1. To dissolve; scatter, as, the meeting *broke up* 2. To open up, as new ground.

- (1) Glad to hear the Devill is *breaking up* house in England  
WARD *Simp Cobler* 12  
(2) *Break up* your fallow ground  
*Jeremiah* iv 3

**break with.** To terminate relations with.

Charles *broke with* his Third Parliament in March, 1629 MASSON *Milton* I 616

**breakers ahead.** Danger threatens from the phrase used to warn a ship's officer of shoal-water ahead.

**breast of it, to make a clean.** To confess all; to tell the whole truth.

**breath, all in a.** Without pause to take breath; as, he told it to me *all in a breath*.

**breath, catch one's.** To check one's breathing.

"I see her," replied I, *catching my breath* with joy

MARRYAT *Peter Simple*

**breath of life or of one's nostrils.** Life itself; the soul, the spirit (*Genesis*

n, 7): hence, that which is indispensable to a person or thing, the influence that animates and sustains effort

No institutions spring up in such countries except those which the prince founds, and he may be truly said to be the *breath of their nostrils* BROUGHAM

**breath, out of.** Panting as a result of over-exertion; spent with vigorous action or labor and so compelled to breathe with difficulty.

**breath or wind, save your.** Desist from useless discussion, action or argument

Truly, Sir, you may please, as the proverb runs, *save your breath* to cool your pottage, and spend it no longer upon me HOWELL *Parley of Beasts* 5

**breath, to catch one's.** To suspend the act of inhalation momentarily.

It *catches my breath* and makes me cough

*The Glasgow Herald* June 11, 1864

**breath, to hold one's.** To check one's breathing, as through alarm.

I *held my breath* . . . I was ready to burst with *holding my breath*

DANIEL DE FOE *Robinson Crusoe*, II

**breath, to take away one's.** To so impress with wonder, astonishment, and surprise as to cause one to pause in breathing.

**breath, under the.** In a whisper.

"Hush," said Ellmor, *under her breath*

LYTTON *Eugene Aram*, I, II

**breathe** occurs occasionally in idiomatic phrases, as in **to breathe again**, **to breathe freely**, to feel relief from anxiety, fright, etc — **to breathe a vein** [Archaic]

To open or lance a vein and let blood from it — **to breathe one's last**. To expire, die

The kingdom, lunging and ready to *breathe out her last*

*Proc. Parhamet* No 82, 1247

He, safe return'd, the race of glory past,  
New to his friends' embrace, had *breath'd his last*

POPE *Rape of the Lock* III, 158

—**to breathe upon.** To tarnish, sully, as, her fair name was never *breathed upon*

**bred**, as the past participial form of **breed** (v.), used colloquially to mean "reared" or "brought up," but properly "trained," occurs in the following idiomatic phrases **bred and born** or **born and bred**. Brought up from childhood, educated, trained

*Born and bred in America* FRANCES KIMBLE *Residence on Georgia Plantation*, p 124

—**bred in** 1. Fixed firmly in the individual by breeding, as, *bred in the bone* 2.

Relating to the results of inbreeding or breeding with near relatives See **BREED** 3. trained —**bred out**. Run out, degenerated —**bred to arms**. Brought up and educated for a soldier

**breeches, to wear the.** To usurp the husband's authority; to rule.

Children rule, old men go to school, women *wear the breeches*.

BURTON *Anat of Melancholy To the Reader*

**breed**, in the sense of "beget," "propagate," or "rear," occurs in the following idiomatic phrases: **breed and seed**: Birth and parentage.

—**to breed in and in**. To breed continually from the same stock or from too closely related blood-relations —**to breed in the line**. To breed from a male and a female of the same stock but of different parents —**to breed out**. To exhaust the breed or degenerate it See SHAKESPEARE *Henry V*, act III, sc 3 —**to breed true**. To produce young habitually that are strictly of the parental type.

**breeze** is used idiomatically to mean a disturbance, row, or quarrel, and especially in **to breeze up**. 1. To become fresher or stronger, as a wind, begin to blow 2. To act briskly and promptly —**to kick up a breeze**. To create a disturbance

**brick**. A fine fellow; a first-rate man; an admirable companion. Frequently a regular brick.

They called him for short . . . *a regular brick*

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends, Brothers of Barchington*.

**brick in one's hat, to have a.** [U S] To be under the influence of liquor.  
**brick wall, to run one's head against a.** To pursue a deadly or disastrous cause. Also, to attempt something that one can not accomplish.  
**bricks, like a thousand (of).** With great noise or violence; forcibly; in a solid mass.

He fell upon us like a *thousand of bricks*, and threatened to make minced-meat of the police and everyone of us *The Picayune*, New Orleans, April 27, 1860

**bridge, a gold or silver.** An easy means of retreat, a pleasant or ready way to escape.

Lay a *bridge of silver* for a flying enemy

SMOLLETT *Don Quixote* IV, 180.

A *golden bridge* is for a flying enemy

BYRON *Deformed Transformed*, II, ii, 14

**brief for, to accept, hold, or take a.** To defend or support by arguments, evidence, etc., to be retained as legal counsel, to argue a point for.

The young fellow seemed to *hold his brief* in his hand rather to help his action.

Ready as Cicero showed himself . . . to *take a brief* from accused and guilty governors. *STEELE* *Taylor*, No. 186

SEELEY *Essays and Lectures* I, 7

**brief, in.** In short; that is, in a few words.

**bring** is used widely in idiomatic phrases, as in **to bring about**, to accomplish, cause

That will *bring him about* or nothing will

DICKENS *Hard Times* 66

**—to bring around, or round.** 1. To bring to a desired decision, position, as of acceptance, convert, convince. 2. To restore, as from a swoon

Dead! I warrant man that we shall *bring you round*

TENNYSON *Enoch Arden*, 842

**—to bring down.** 1. To cause to fall, kill, as game, as, he *brought down* a partridge. 2. To reduce in position; humiliate, abase, humble. 3. To continue, as, to *bring down* the statistics to the present day **—to bring down the house.** To call forth general applause

Every sentence *brought down the house*, as I never saw one brought down before

LOWELL *My Study Windows*, 384.

**—to bring down upon.** To cause to befall, as a curse or doom **—to bring forth.**

1. To produce, as young, leaves, or fruit. 2. To disclose, as a secret **—to bring forward.** 1. To adduce, as a new argument. 2. To carry forward, as a sum from one page to another. 3. *Arch* To render uniform in cases where new work has been superimposed on old **—to bring home.** 1. To prove conclusively, as a charge, make vividly felt, as the truth

The benevolences and forced loans which *brought home* the sense of tyranny to the subjects of her predecessors were . . . abandoned

GREEN *Short Hist Eng People*, v, p. 405.

2. To put back in its place, as an anchor

**—to bring in.** 1. To yield, as rent or revenue. 2. To introduce, as a bill. 3. To render, as a verdict. 4. To persuade to unite with some body, as a church. 5. To lead, as in whist or bridge, and take tricks by means of the lower cards of a suit, the higher ones having been played. 6. *Baseball* To bat (a base-runner) home **—to bring off.**

1. To rescue, as from a wreck, clear, as from condemnation. 2. To achieve, accomplish, cause **—to bring on.** 1. To cause to begin, as, to *bring on* a battle. 2. To convey with one, as from a distance, as, to *bring on* samples. 3. To originate **—to bring on one's way.** To escort in one's journey **—to bring out.** 1. To set forth, introduce, as a young woman into society, or a foreign loan for subscription. 2. To publish, as a new book. 3. To produce, as a play, on the stage. 4. To expose, elicit the truth of. 5. To develop **—to bring over.** To convert, persuade **—to bring through.** To get safely through a critical period, as of an illness, as, the doctor *brings* his patient *through* a serious illness **—to bring to.** 1. To resuscitate, as from a swoon, revive, as one suffering from over-immersion. 2. To bring (a ship) up to the wind. 3. To cause (a ship) to stop, as by a shot across her bows **—to bring to bear.** 1. To cause to act or have influence.

No human instrument has been *brought to bear* upon these stones

TYNDALL *Fragments of Science* I, vii, 245.

2. To aim, as, to *bring a ship's gun to bear* on defenses —to **bring to book**. See under *book*. —to **bring to grass**. In mining, to convey to the earth's surface, as ore for smelting, etc. —to **bring to light**. To reveal clearly —to **bring to pass**. To accomplish —to **bring under**. To cause to yield, subjugate —to **bring up**. 1. To rear, educate, as a child. 2. To call attention to, introduce. 3. To come to a standstill, stop, as, we *brought up* outside the city. 4. To cause to advance, as, to *bring up* reinforcements. 5. To vomit. 6. *Print*. To cause, as the whole or part of anything printed, to show with a proper color and distinctness done by underlaying or overlaying —to **bring up the rear**. To form or move the rear —to **bring up with a round turn**. To cause to stop suddenly, stop effectually said especially of a course of conduct.

**briny, the**. The sea; as, he took his dip in the *briny* every day  
**bristles, to set up one's**. To show anger, to bristle up, as a hedgehog when alarmed.

**broad as it is long, to be as**. To amount or come to the same thing

**broadside on**. With the side toward the object considered, sidewise.

**broke, clear, dead, or stone**. Strapped, hard up, penniless

"How do you do when you're *stone broke*?" I ask him. "Well, sir, sometimes I comes across a gentleman as gives me a bob and starts me again."

GEORGE R. SIMS *How the Poor Live* 16

**bromide**. [U. S.] A common-place bore, one given to using platitudes, or stale jests. Also, the platitude or jest itself used figuratively from the well known sedative effect of the drug. From the question posed by Gelett Burgess in "Are You a *Bromide*?"

**broom, new**. One who has recently been given an appointment or office

**brooms sweep clean, new**. Persons newly appointed to office or position correct the mistakes made by their predecessors. Also, those recently installed wish to introduce new methods and sweep away the old

**broomstick, to marry over the**. To go through a mock marriage ceremony, in which both parties jump over a broomstick.

They were married over a *broom-stick*. MACAULAY *Miscel. Writings* (1860) I, 95

**broth of a boy**. A good fellow, a fine chap.

But Juan was quite a *broth of a boy*.

A thing of impulse and a child of song. BYRON *Don Juan* VIII, 24

**Brother Jonathan**. The people of the United States or the personification of their Government.

Said to have been derived from Washington's frequent allusion to *Jonathan Trumbull*, Governor of Connecticut, by this name

**brother of the quill**. A fellow author; one of the scribbling tribe. See *QUILL-DRIVER*

**brown-bess**. The bronzed flint-musket formerly used in the British army.

A good soldier sleeping with his hand on his musket, his wedded wife and dear *Brown Bess*. R. PORTER *Traveller's Sketches, Russia and Sweden* I xxiv 273

**Brown, Jones, and Robinson**. [Brit.] Types of the English middle-class abroad, satirized by Richard Doyle in *Punch*

**brown-stone front**. A typical home of well-to-do persons in New York in the later half of the 19th Century.

In New York politics, efforts are sometimes made to bring about what are called the primary elections in July, because in that month, it is said, "*the brown stone fronts*" are out of town. *Daily News*, London, Oct. 10, 1883

**brown-study**. Deep thought or speculation; reverie; musing; absent-mindedness.

Invention flags, his brain grows muddy,  
And black despair succeeds *brown study*.

CONGREVE *An Impossible Thing*



**brown, to be done, or do, or to do up.** [Colloq.] 1. To be imposed upon or deceived, or to take in thoroughly or neatly; swindle. 2. To do thoroughly and completely as, the job was *done up brown*.

**Browns, astonish the.** Give a shock to, cause surprize among, as by doing an unusual thing, act independently of public opinion or of convention; flaunt in the face of Mrs Grundy.

Anne Boleyn had a whole host of Browns, or "country cousins," who were welcomed at Court in the reign of Elizabeth. The queen, however, was quick to see what was *gauche*, and did not scruple to reprove the Browns if she noticed anything in their conduct not *comme il faut*. Her bluntness of speech often *astonished the Browns*.  
Brewer *Phrase and Fable* p. 181

**bruiser.** A boxer, a prize-fighter, a pugilist

At college he pulled stroke-oar in the Christ-Church boat, and had thrashed all the best *bruisers* of the town  
Thackeray *Uncle Farr* XI

**Brummagem or Brum.** [Brit.] Showy but worthless, shoddy; corruption of *Birmingham* where cheap, flashy jewelry and metal articles were made.

Those may be *Brummagem* or Manchester manners, but they won't go down here  
Broughton *Comeh up as a Flower*

**brush** is used idiomatically in the following phrases — **to brush aside.** To put forcibly to one side as if with a brush — **brush away** To remove with or as with a brush, as, to *brush away* a tear — **brush up** 1. Look over or study, as, to *brush up* one's Greek. 2. Cajole by flattery, praise, blarney. 3. Renovate, freshen up — **knight of the brush.** A painter, whether of pictures, scenes, or houses

Occasionally, however, the author has his nose put out of joint by the scene painter, I heard a distinguished *Knight of the Brush* exclaim

J. COLEMAN in *Longman's Mag.*, VII 78 (1885)

**brute.** [Brit. Coll. Slang.] See quotation

A "man," in college phrase, is a collegian, and as matriculation is the sign and seal of acceptance, a scholar before that ceremony is not a "man," and therefore only a "biped brute."  
Brewer *Phrase and Fable*

**bubble.** Something fraudulent or insubstantial, an imposition; used in various combinations, as a *bubble company*, a *bubble scheme*, to designate fraudulence.

**bubble and squeak.** 1. Anything that is vain and useless, false show; emptiness; vanity. 2. A dish consisting of cabbage and beef fried together, in New England, hashed meat

Rank and title! *bubble and squeak!* No! not half so good as *bubble and squeak!* But foreign rank and title, foreign cabbage and beef! foreign *bubble and foreign squeak!*  
Lyton *My Novel* viii, 8

**buck.** *n.* A dandy.

**buck.** *v.* To rear and plunge, as a horse trying to unseat its rider; figuratively, to oppose; object to, run counter to.

"Well," said one, "that fellow went to market like a bird." "Yes," echoed another, "Bucked a blessed hurricane." "Buck a town down," cried a third. "Never seed a horse strip himself quicker," cried a fourth. A. C. GRANT *Bush Laff in Australia* I 131

**buck the tiger.** [U. S.] To gamble, to play against the bank. See **FIGHT**.

**buck, to pass the.** [U. S.] To shift responsibility from the practise in card-playing of laying an object on the table before a player as a reminder of his turn to deal, then passing it to the next dealer. In poker, a marker is sometimes put into a jack-pot, to indicate that he who receives the buck must order another jack-pot when it is his deal

**buck up.** Brace up, put in new energy: used chiefly imperatively.

"You know there's an examination to pass," said his sister "I know that, 'Randall, and of course I'd have to buck up" WHITE *West End*, 48

**bucket shop.** [U. S.] A gambling den in which there is a pretense of dealing in stocks or commodities, as on the regular exchanges.

A "bucket-shop" in New York is a low "gin mill" or "distillery," where smart quantities of spirits are dispensed in pitchers and pails (buckets). When the shops for dealing in one-share or five-share lots of stocks were opened, these dispensaries of smaller lots than could be obtained from regular dealers were at once named *bucket-shops* THE *Evening Post*, New York, Oct. 1881

**Buckeye State.** Ohio: from the abundance of its horsechestnuts which, when stripped of the husk, resemble the eye of a buck-deer

**buckle to.** 1. Fall to work with energy, as, *buckle to a hard job*. 2. Apply oneself vigorously, set to work

The Epitaph *buckles to* Study when Shame shall make him uneasy  
LOCKE *Human Understanding* II. XXI

**buckle in.** To grapple in close embrace; seize around the body, as in a scuffle

**buckle of the belt, to turn the.** To prepare for close fighting

**buckram, men in.** Imaginary persons, in allusion to Falstaff's boastful story.

Two rogues in *buckram* suits  
O monstrous! eleven *buckram men* grown out of two  
SHAKESPEARE *Henry IV*, act II sc 4

**buckskin.** A Virginian.

"These are high times when a British general is to take counsel of a Virginia *buckskin*" GEN BRADDOCK, in rejecting George Washington's advice  
C F HOFFMAN *Winter in Far West* 1, 67

**bud.** A débutante, a young girl who has just "come out" in society.

This is your first party Yes, I am what is called a *bud*  
Confessions of Frivolous Girl 39

**bud or blossom, to check, crush or nip in the.** To prevent the development of; check at the outset

The *crushing in the bud* of the insurrection Rep on Conduct of Sir J Cope 12  
Promising germs of freedom were *crushed in the bud* FREEMAN *Norman Conq* I iv 258.  
Mine hopes *nipped in the blossom* BISHOP HALL *Remonstrance*, Works (1656)

**buddy.** [U. S.] A companion in arms, chum: used also as a nickname for the American soldier of the American Expeditionary Force to Europe in the World War, 1917-18.

**budget** is used in the phrase **to open the budget**, to mean, to make the annual financial statement to a representative assembly. By extension, to speak one's mind. See also quotation.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in presenting his annual statement, was formerly said to *open the budget*. In a pamphlet entitled *The Budget Opened*, Sir R Walpole was compared, apropos of his forthcoming Excise Bill, to a mountebank opening his wallet of quack medicines and conjuring tricks.

SIR JAMES A H MURRAY *New English Dict* vol 1, p 1156

**buff.** The skin; hence, **in the buff**, naked, bare; **stripped to the buff**, without clothes or other impediments; hence, ready for action, as a pugilist in the prize ring.

*Stripping ourselves to the buff*, we hung up our steaming clothes  
C KING *Sierra Nevada* viii

**buff or buffer, to stand.** To bear the brunt; endure; also, act as protector or check.

Would my courage come up to a fourth part of my ill-nature, I'd *stand buff* to her relations, and thrust her out of doors  
VANBRUGH *Provoked Wife* act 1, sc 1.

**buffer State.** Any small State which separates the territories of two greater States, thus Belgium is a *buffer state* between France and Germany

**buffle-headed.** Foolish, stupid, conceited

But my Lord Mayor, a talking, bragging, *buffle-headed* fellow

Perry's Diary, Jan. 29, 1668

**built that way, not.** [U. S.] Not given to such a practise, not approachable — used usually in referring to one's integrity.

**bulge on one, to get the.** [U. S.] To have the advantage over another.

Well, you've rather *got the bulge on me* — Or maybe we've both *got the bulge*, somehow.

MARK TWAIN  *Innocents at Home* 18

**bulk** occurs idiomatically in the following **in bulk:** Loose, in mass, not in boxes, bales, sacks, or packages — said of commodities thus stowed — as when a ship's hold is filled with loose grain or the like — **to break bulk.** To begin to unload as the cargo of a ship

The whole [cargo] can be sampled and sold the moment the steamer *breaks bulk*

*The Times* London, March 24, 1883

— **to load in bulk.** To ship a cargo loose, as when it is salt, sand, or grain

**bull.**<sup>1</sup> [U. S.] Banter, bluff, bosh, nonsense

**bull.**<sup>2</sup> The male of domestic and other cattle. A word used in a number of phrases, as, **a bull in a china-shop:** A clumsy person who from lack of sense or judgment, or from anger commits grave errors in conducting negotiations, or creates havoc or damage

Now that they are all away, let us frisk at our ease — and have at everything, like *the bull in the china-shop*

THACKERAY *Book of Snobs* xxi

— **to bull into.** To go into or at hastily, blindly, and with a rush, as, *to bull into a piece of work* — **to bull a barrel.** To pour water into it when nearly empty

— **to take the bull by the horns.** To meet or grapple with a danger or difficulty resolutely or boldly

Determined *to take the bull by the horns*, I stepped forward. THURGOOD *Moab* VI 107.

— **to trust as far as one can fling a bull by the tail.** To distrust, have no confidence in

This is not enmity, Sir, it is a matter of profit and loss, trust me

I'd trust

you as far as I could fling a bull by the tail

TRADE *Gold* 1

**bull-beef, to bluster like.** To conduct oneself like an enraged bull, run around boisterously

**bull-beef, to look as big as.** See quotation.

*To look as big as bull-beef* — To look stout and hearty, as if fed on bull-beef — Bull-beef was formerly recommended for making men strong and muscular

BREWSTER *Phrase and Fable* 524

**bulldog.** [Brit.] 1. A proctor's assistant or marshal — university slang. Who should we see coming down upon us but a Proctor with his *bull-dogs* (not dogs, you know, but the strongest gyps in the college) F. ASHLEY *Vice Versa* V

2. A man of tenacious courage and determination 3. A pistol. 4. A main-deck gun

(3) "I have always a brace of *bull dogs* about me"

So saying he exhibited a

very handsome, highly finished, and richly mounted pair of pistols

SCOTT *St Ronan's Well* II 191

(4) *Bulldog* or muzzled bull-dog, the great gun which stands housed in the officers' ward-room cabin

SMITH *Sailors' Word Book* (1867)

**bulldoze.** [U. S.] To coerce or intimidate by threats or violence, influence unfairly — used originally when referring to the intimidation of negro voters in Louisiana.

By dint of *bulldozing*, and an abundance of hard service, most of them got their fine sentimental notions pretty well knocked out of them before they had been many weeks in camp

J. D. BILLINGS *Hard Tack and Coffee* 207

**bulldozer.** [U. S.] One who bulldozes, a bully

The great *bulldozer* of Europe

*North American Review* CXVII, 1878

**bullet has its billet, every.** Nothing occurs by chance or is done without some purpose or effect. a saying attributed to King William III of England, and meaning, "those are killed whose death Providence has ordained."

He never received a wound So true is the odd saying of King William, that "*every bullet has its billet*"  
*Wesley Journal*, June 6, 1765

**Bullion State.** [U. S.] MISSOURI so called from the efforts of Senator Benton in favor of gold and silver as against paper money.

**bull's eye, to make a.** To make a hit, score a success; to win an advantage from a hit in the center spot of a target

The Republicans had *made a bull's eye*, and were jubilant

*New York Herald*, August 1, 1888

**bully.** [U. S.] Excellent, splendid, first rate

The cook *gave us a bully dinner*

WILL CARLETON *Willy Reilly*

All the boys done *bully*, but Corporal Johnson, he flunked

MRS CUSTER *Tenting on the Plains* 680

**bully-boy.** A boon companion; a good fellow, a thorough brick.

"And he that is a *bully boy*

Come pledge me on this ground "

*Deuteromecha* (1609)

**bully for you!** [U. S.] Well done! bravo!

"Darling boy" I had thought of this already " "*Bully for you, mamma!* Of course you did "  
JUSTIN MCCARTHY *Fair Saxon* XIX

**bullyrag.** [U. S.] To threaten, to scold.

**bulrush, to seek a knot in a.** To seek for something that does not exist; create difficulties where none exist, to cavil over trifles

**bumble-puppy.** 1. Whist played unscientifically, as in the family circle.

*Bumble-puppy*, or domestic whist at shilling points *Longman's Mag* VI 597

2. Nine-holes. an old game resembling bagatelle, but played out-of-doors with leaden dumps or marbles

**bummer.** A plundering, scouting, straggler of the army in the Civil War, 1861-65, an irregular forager.

You have doubtless heard of Sherman's "*bummers*" These were pure silver *bummers*, plated-ware *bummers*, jewelry *bummers*, women's clothing *bummers*, provision *bummers*, in fine a *bummer* or *bummers* for every stealable thing

*Southern Hist Soc Papers* XII 428

**bunco.** [U. S.] I. r. To swindle or rob by the game of bunco, or in a similar manner. II. n A swindling game or trick by which two or more confederates decoy a stranger to a house, for the purpose of robbing or fleecing him, confidence-game Spelt also **bunko**.

The principal in the *bunco* game by which

Peck

was fleeced out of

\$10,000 has been arrested

*The New York Tribune* Oct 8, 1891

—**bunco-joint.** A haunt of bunco-men —**bunco-man.** One who swindles or robs by bunco —**bunco-steerer.** A person who serves as a decoy in bunco to bring in victims, usually by claiming acquaintance with strangers on the street

**buncombe.** Inflated or bombastic speechmaking for effect only; any specious utterance of a legislator made to please his constituents. The word is supposed to have had its origin in the remark of a member of Congress from Buncombe county, N. C., that he was "talking only for Buncombe." Spelt also **bunkum**.

Very naively, he told those who remained that they might go too, he should speak for some time, but "he was only talking for Buncombe."

WHEELER *Hust* North Carolina 18

Talk plain truth, and leave *bunkum* for right honourables who keep their places thereby

KINGSLEY *Two Years Ago* XXV

America too will find that caucuses, division-lists, stump-oratory, and speeches to Buncombe will not carry men to the immortal gods

CARLYLE *Latter-Day Pamphlets, Parliaments* p. 93

**bundle, to.** 1. To sleep in the same bed without removing one's clothing; a custom formerly in vogue in New England when men and women sweethearts slept together. WASHINGTON IRVING *Knickerbocker* p. 295

2. To dismiss or send away abruptly and unceremoniously; dispose of hurriedly or in a summary manner frequently with *off*, *out*, etc.; as, to *bundle* a person *off* or *out* —to **bundle up**, To wrap up or dress warmly.

**bunk.** [U S] Bosh; a contraction of *buncombe* or *bunkum*. See BUNCOMBE.

**bunkered.** In golf, characterizing the state of a player whose ball lies in a bunker; as, he was badly *bunkered*. Used figuratively to designate, placed in an awkward position, thwarted, stumped

**burbank, to.** [U S] To create new varieties of fruits and flowers by hybridization, as practised by Luther Burbank

To *burbank* is by this time practically a legitimate active verb in the "United States language," in the same category with "fletcherize." *The Literary Digest*, April 10, 1915

**burden of proof.** The obligation resting upon one or other of the parties to a controversy, or action at law to establish by proofs a given proposition, before being entitled to receive an answer from the other side.—

*New Standard Dictionary*

To this general rule, that the *burden of proof* is on the party holding the affirmative, there are some exceptions GREENLEAF *On Evidence* vol. 1, pt. II, ch. 3, p. 105

—**real burden.** (*Scots Law*) A money condition imposed on an estate in lands binding both as against creditors and heirs

The *burden of proof* is on the party holding the affirmative

GREENLEAF *On Evidence* I, II, III, 105

**burgoo.** 1. [U S] A rich soup or broth made of meat and vegetables highly seasoned and served at a barbecue. 2. Oatmeal porridge: a sailors' term.

**burden of a song.** That part of a song which is repeated, the refrain.

**Buridan's ass.** A man who hesitates before alternatives, an undecided, irresolute man; a phrase originating with John Buridan, a French philosopher of the 13th century, author of the paradox that an ass, placed between [two measures of oats making equal impressions on his senses, being unable to choose, would starve. The problem was stated by Dante in the "Divine Comedy," as regards man. See "Paradise," canto 4

**burn** occurs in the following idiomatic phrases **burn a hole in one's pocket.** Spend as soon as earned or received; said of money and of any one who is unthrifty: —**burn one's boats or bridges.** Cut off all hope of retreat —a **burnt child dreads fire.** One who has suffered pain takes care to avoid the cause, pain teaches caution —to **be burned out.** To have one's house, store, or the like, burned with the contents —to **burn a bowl or curling-stone.** In playing bowls or curling, to displace a bowl accidentally —to **burn away.** To destroy or be destroyed by gradual burning —to **burn daylight or time.** To burn a candle, etc., during daylight, hence, to do something unnecessary, also, to devote time to talk instead of action —to **burn in one's pocket.** To give one no peace till taken out; said usually of money —to **burn in or into.** To eat into, as fire, he impressed indelibly upon (the mind, etc.) —to **burn one's fingers.** To suffer loss or damage by precipitated meddling,

or from taking part in anything, as speculation, in card-playing, to touch a card prematurely **to burn the candle at both ends**. To waste or consume from two ends at the same time. Be reckless and extravagant of one's energy as by working all day and playing all night, or by tiring oneself by daily work and nightly toil.

You can't *burn the candle at both ends* and make anything by it in the long run.  
S. BOWLES cited in Merriam's *Bowls*, I, 299.

To double all your griefs, and *burn life's candle*, as the village gossips say, at *either end*.  
KINGSLEY *Saint's Tragedy* III, 1, 140.

**bury the hatchet, to.** To cease from hostilities, forget injuries, make peace, opposed to **to dig or take up the hatchet**, to declare war both from ceremonies connected with the war-hatchet, or tomahawk, among American Indians.

It is much to be regretted that the American Government, having brought the Great War to a conclusion, did not *bury the hatchet* altogether.

*The Times*, London, quoted by Brewer in "Phrase and Fable," p. 199.

**bush a road.** [U. S.] Mark the way for logging-teams over ice or the like by setting up pieces of bush or undergrowth.

**bush, good wine needs no.** Anything that is good needs no advertising for its own quality will win its way—a proverb derived from the practise of displaying an ivy-bush outside of a tavern to indicate that wine was sold there, the ivy being sacred to Bacchus the god of wine.

If it be true that "*good wine needs no bush*," 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue.

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* Epilog.

**bushel, to measure another's corn with one's own.** To seek to secure every advantage for oneself.

**bushel, under a.** Secretly or for the purpose of concealment.

Neither do men light a candle and put it *under a bushel*, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

MATTHEW v. 15.

**bushwhack.** [U. S.] **1.** To propel a boat by pulling overhanging branches or bushes. **2.** To range through the bush, prowl among the bushes, hence, to engage in guerilla warfare, or to become a predatory deserter.

We began to pull the boat up stream by a process which in the techniques of the boatmen is called *bushwhacking*.

T. FLINT *Recollections* 86.

They were gallant *bushwhackers* and hunters of the racoon by moonlight.

IRVING *Knickerbocker* VI 342.

**business** is used in various senses in the following idiomatic phrases.

—**a person's business.** The affairs that relate to one's occupation or calling, also, work to be done on behalf of another — **man of business.** One who is engaged in public affairs or mercantile transactions, one of business-like habits.

If we were all *men of business*, our mental pleasures would be abridged.

BUCKLE *Hist. of Civiliz.* I, II, 629.

—**on business.** Relating to some enterprise or affair concerning another, as I must see him *on business* — **to do the business for.** To settle completely, hence, to kill, destroy, or ruin.

If a pinch of snuff, or a stride or two across the room, will not *do the business for me*— I take a razor at once.

SIR FINE TRISTRAM SHANDY ix, 13.

—**to go about one's business.** To go and mind one's own affairs, used imperatively as a form of impatient dismissal.

*Go about your business.* I hate the sight of you.

FIELDING *Tom Jones* XVI v.

—**to have no business.** To have no right, as of action, or title, or power of interference, to be of no concern to one.

A Captain of Dragoons *has no business* with a wife, but then we are always doing what we've *no business* to do.

H. SMART *Play or Pay* ix 177.

Such kind of architecture *has no business* with rich ornament.

RUSKIN *Seven Lamps* iv 105.

—**to make (a thing) one's business.** To undertake to accomplish (a particular thing) — **to mean business.** To be in earnest in regard to any thing proposed or

under consideration specifically, to be earnestly intent on marrying someone — **to mind one's own business**. To restrict oneself to attending to one's personal affairs  
**business-end**. [U. S.] The practical side, as of a commercial enterprise or undertaking.

**bust**. [U. S.] A drunken revel, spree

He abandoned work, and went on a fortnight's *bust*, returning at the end of that time without a cent and with delirium tremens. T. B. CASS *New York Boarding Houses*.

**but**, the adverb, is used in the following idiomatic phrases **all but**, almost, nearly, everything short of, as, he was *all but* dead. **but and ben**. A two-roomed cottage or the inner and outer-rooms of a cottage — **but-house**. The kitchen — **but now**. Only a moment ago, just now — **can not choose but**. Can do nothing but — **to be but and ben with**. To live in close intimacy with

**but**, the conjunction, is used in the following idiomatic phrases **but and** [Scot.] And also, but also — **but and if**. But if, if — **but that**. 1. Otherwise than that, except for the fact that. 2. Without, as, you can not look *but that* the tower strikes the eye — **but what**. An incorrect expression in frequent use for *but that*

Nor am I yet so old *but what* I can rough it still

ANTHONY TROLLOPE *North America* i, 47.

**butt and butt**. Placed end to end, that is, with the butt ends together.

**butter** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases, as, **fine or soft words butter no parsnips**. Mere words do not provide the means of livelihood, actions speak louder than words — **butter one's bread on both sides**. 1. To be wastefully extravagant. 2. To secure for oneself privileges from two parties at one and the same time — **butter on, to lay the**. To have recourse to fulsome praise, flatter, cajole; wheedle

A lavish exchange of compliments, the *butter being laid on pretty thick*

*The World*, London, Oct. 13, 1880

— **butter to butter is no relish**. Something substantial is necessary to give flavor to a ditty — **butter would not melt in one's mouth, to look as if**. To look simple, foolish, harmless — said contemptuously of persons of excessively demure appearance.

She smiles and languishes, you'd think that *butter would not melt in her mouth*

THACKERAY *Pendennis* ix, 595.

**butter-boat, to empty the**. To lavish praise on, flatter fulsomely.

**butter-fingers**. One whose fingers are slippery, as if they had been smeared with butter, especially, one who drops that which he should hold or who fails to hold anything that falls or is put into his hands. Used also adjectively, as **butter-fingered**.

[A discreet Christian meets with few rebuffs, a blundering *butter-fingered* one with many.]  
*Christian Commonwealth*, Feb. 14, 1884

**Butternut**. [U. S.] A Confederate soldier, whose homespun clothing during the early part of the Civil War was dyed with butternut-juice.

The *butternut* gentry . . . about 400 of them are in the camp hospitals

*New York Independent*, Mar. 22, 1862

**buttered, to know the side on which one's bread is**. To know where one's interests lie, to be able to take care of oneself; to know what's what.

**butt in**. [U. S.] To intrude persistently upon another, or obtrude with uninvited opinions in a conversation notwithstanding pointed discouragement.

**button, not to care or give a brass**. To be totally unconcerned about; care nothing at all.

**button, to be short or have lost a**. To be weak in intellect, foolish or silly.

**buttonhole**. A flower worn in the hole of the lapel of a coat — **to button-hole or to take by the button**. To hold by the button-hole or button of the coat; detain in conversation, bore

The man who is *button-holed* or held . . . must listen to half an hour's harangue about nothing interesting *All the Year Round* VII, 381.

He went about *button-holing* and boring every one. H. KINGSLEY *Mathilde* II, 140.  
—to take one down a *button-hole*. To reduce one's conceit.

**buttons**, or a **boy in buttons**. A page or attendant, so called from the number of buttons on his uniform.

The titter of an electric bell brought a large, fat *buttons*, with a stage effect of being dressed to look small. HOWELLS *Hazard of New Fortunes* vol I, p 58.

**buttons, to have a soul above**. To be superior to one's position or employment.

My father was an eminent button maker but I had a soul above buttons.  
I panted for a liberal profession. GEORGE COLMAN *Sylvia Daggerwood* I, 10.

**buy** is used in the following idiomatic phrases **to buy in**. 1. To purchase for the owner, as at auction when the bids are too low, also, to buy stock or an interest in a company or partnership. 2. *Stock Exchange*. To purchase stock and claim from the seller the difference in price between time of purchase and time of delivery, and broker's commission when such stock has been delayed in delivery —to **buy off**. To get rid of a person or opposition, secure exemption by payment, to purchase discharge or release from military service.

To *buy off* the presence of troops by enormous gifts to their captains.

—to **buy one out**. To purchase all one's investments or interest in a company or concern, also, to pay out money to secure release from military service —to **buy over**. To win over to one's interest by a bribe or other inducement —to **buy the refusal**. To pay for the privilege of accepting or rejecting, secure the right to close a bargain or retire from it, obtain an option —to **buy up**. To purchase the entire stock, edition, supply, or the like, of, make a corner.

An appeal to the State to *buy up* all the railways in the kingdom.

R. PATTERSON in *Fortnightly Review* July, 1867.

**buzz-wagon**. [U. S. Slang.] Any kind of a motor-car.

**by** is used in the following idiomatic phrases **by all means**. Certainly; on every account —**by oneself**. Alone, apart, unassisted —**by the by** or **bye**. Incidentally, by the way.

*By the by*, I hope 'tis not true that your brother is absolutely ruined.

SHERIDAN *School for Scandal* act 1, sc. 1.

—**by the ears**. In disagreement, at variance, commonly in the phrase to **set by the ears**. To bring about a quarrel or an argument, cause discord between —**by the way**.

1. On or beside the road. 2. Incidentally, by the by. **by trade**. In the exercise of, or professing, a trade, as, a tailor *by trade* —**day by day**, **one by one**, **piece by piece**. Each day, one, or piece, as the case may be, individually and separately —to **come by**. To acquire —to **set store by**. To hold as valuable or of worth, esteem —to **stand by**. To stand up for, support.

**by and by**. After a time; at some time in the future; before long.—the **by and by**. The hereafter.

**by and large**. [U. S.] Comprehensively.

Taking you *by and large*, you do seem to be more different kinds of an ass than any creature I ever saw before.

MARK TWAIN *Old Times*

**by the wind**. Hard up, in difficulties.

**bygone**. That which has gone by; something said or done in the past; as **let bygones be bygones**. Forget old grievances.

*Bygones shall be bygones*, the new era shall begin. CARLYLE *French Revolution* II v i 166.

**Byzantine logothete**. [U. S.] See quotation. A term applied by Colonel Theodore Roosevelt to President Wilson during the latter's exchange of notes with the Imperial German Government, in 1915.

The officials of *Byzantium* were called *Logothetes*, "men of learning," "academics"; their foes were "barbarians." These men wrote notes to their foes, who read the notes and conquered the empire. Term defined by Professor BASIL GILDERSLEEVE as "a scrivener," a subordinate who draws up papers. HOYT's *New Cycle of Quotations*.



## C

**cabal.** A number of persons secretly united for effecting by intrigue some private or party purpose. In English history, the ministry formed in the reign of Charles II. after the fall of Clarendon (1667-1673). It was essentially a committee of the Privy Council ("committee for foreign affairs"), and was a forerunner of the modern cabinet.

It happened by a whimsical coincidence that, in 1671, the cabinet consisted of five persons the initial letters of whose names made up the word *Cabal*—Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. These ministers were therefore emphatically called the *Cabal*, and they soon made that appellation so infamous that it has never since their time been used except as a term of reproach.

MACAULAY *History of England* vol. i, p. 165

—**cabal system.** A system for memorizing in which the initials of the words to be memorized are combined with a vocable.

**caballine fountain.** The fountain Hippocrene, said to have sprung from a stroke of the foot of Pegasus, hence, a fountain of inspiration.

**cabaret.** 1. A tavern; wine-shop. 2. A tea-or-coffee-set. 3. A cabaret-show.—**cabaretier.** *n.* A saloon-keeper.—**cabaret-show.** A vaudeville performance to entertain guests while at meals in some hotels, restaurants, taverns, or the like, where performers dance or sing on the floor of the dining-hall.

**cabbage.** 1. To pilfer or steal; appropriate a part of a customer's cloth. Your tailor, instead of shreds, *cabbages* whole yards of cloth.

ARBUOTHNOT *Hist. of John Bull* pt. i, ch. 10

But he said, if I *cabbage* that ring tonight I shall be richer tomorrow.

Notes and Queries Ser. 6 vi 210

2. To translate with the aid of a key, crib, use a pony.—**Arkansas cabbage.** An annual herb of the mustard family with oval-oblong glaucous leaves and showy bluish-purple flowers. It is cultivated for ornamental purposes.—**barge-man's cabbage.** The turnip.—**cabbage tree.** A palm with a cabbage terminal leaf-bud, as the cabbage-palmetto of the West Indies, or a fan-palm or feather-palm.—**cabbage-tree hat.** [Austral.] A hat with low crown and broad brim made of the leaves of the cabbage-tree.—**cabbage-tree mob.** [Austral.] The larrikins, so called from their head-dress, the cabbage-tree hat.—**St. Patrick's cabbage.** A hardy Irish herb with pink flowers cultivated as a garden plant in England.—**the thousand-headed cabbage.** Brussels sprouts.

**cabinet.** A small private room for consultation, retirement, or intimate intercourse. Hence, the body of men who act as official advisers of a government and who are entrusted with the administration of its executive departments.—**cabinet photograph or picture.** A photograph or picture suitable to a small room, carefully finished so as to permit of close inspection.—**kitchen cabinet.** [U. S.] A political coterie of intimate friends of President Jackson, who were supposed to have more influence in his administration than his cabinet and were said to have access to him metaphorically "through the kitchen."

**cable, to cut or slip one's cable.** To die, from the severing of cable connections, as in cases of emergency.

**caboodle.** [U. S.] An aggregate or collection, especially of people usually with the *whole*, and sometimes rendered the *whole kit and caboodle* meaning the entire outfit—things and persons collectively.

The *whole caboodle* came out and fell upon me, till I was soft as a squash, and then they took me up for fighting.

The New Orleans Picayune, Feb. 23, 1858

**caboose.** [U. S.] A ship's galley or kitchen; a car on a work-train adapted to living purposes; the cab of a railway locomotive. Originally, a ship's stove.

He has set fire to the *caboose*, as they call it, in merchantmen

Blackwood's Magazine XXXVI 33

The *caboose* of a construction train, containing workmen and several boys

Chicago Times, June 18, 1881

**cacoethes scribendi.** [L] A morbid desire for scribbling or seeing oneself in print.

Juvenal terms this disease a *Cacoethes*, which is a hard word for a disease called in plain English "the itch of writing." This *Cacoethes* is as epidemic as the small pox.  
Addison *Spectator* No. 532

**caddice-garter.** A manservant, also, a man of inferior rank. See SHAKESPEARE *I Henry IV* act II, sc. 4.

**cadet.** Derived from the Latin *caput*, head, this word taken into English through the French has many meanings unrelated to its origin. These are given below, as treated by "Funk & Wagnalls' New Standard Dictionary." 1. A pupil in a military or naval school, as at West Point, or at Woolwich or Sandhurst, England, a boy or young man who receives military or naval training. Formerly, also a pupil at the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis—now designated **midshipman**. 2. A younger or the youngest son or brother, also, a junior member in some organizations. 3. A younger branch of a family, or a member of it. 4. A gentleman who entered the army without a commission to learn the art of war, as the younger sons of noble families in France before the Revolution. 5. An appointee to the colonial service of England, after a civil service competitive examination, especially the **Eastern cadets**, in the Straits Settlements, Ceylon, and Hongkong; also, formerly a junior clerk in the English East India Company. 6. A student in a theological seminary who, on condition of submitting to certain regulations and performing certain missionary services, receives a large compensation wherewith to defray other expenses of his course. 7. [New Zealand] A young man who works without pay on a sheep-farm to gain experience. 8. A student who seeks practical experience by working in a laboratory, workshop, etc., as in the study of electricity, etc. 9. [Chicago.] A person qualified to teach in the public schools and employed as a substitute until assigned to a regular position. 10. [New York] A person who cohabits with a woman that he may subsist on her earnings as a prostitute; also, one who seduces an innocent girl so as to place her in a house of ill fame; a procurer: offensive uses.

**Cadmean victory.** A victory that is ruinous or fatal to the victor. a phrase of uncertain origin, but commonly connected with Cadmus who sowed the dragon's teeth from which sprang armed men who slew each other.

**Cæsar's wife must be above suspicion.** The reputation of a great man's wife must be without blemish, hence, any one who moves in select circles must be without reproach or too worthy to be suspected of evil.  
*The wife of Cæsar must be above suspicion* MERVILLE *Roman Empire* IV, 1, 152

**café.** [Fr.] 1. Coffee. 2. A coffee-house, refreshment-room, or restaurant, sometimes [U. S.] a barroom—**café chantant**. [F] A concert-hall or -garden where light refreshments are served—**café frappé**. [Fr] Equal parts of sweetened and frozen coffee and cream

**cafeteria.** A cafe where the patrons wait upon themselves. From the Mexican *cafeteria*, a store where coffee is sold at retail.

**Cain, to raise.** [U. S.] To create a disturbance; seek a quarrel.

**cake** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases, as, **hard cake**, hard to bear—**hurry up the cakes**. [U. S.] Move briskly, step lively, get busy—it's all **cake and pie**. It is very profitable and gratifying—to be kept to one's **cake and milk**. To be kept within bounds or under supervision, to be held to one's work without cessation—to come out with the **cakes**. To be dull-witted or silly.

I baynt such a borneyd fool as that No, no, if you comed out at the *cakes*, I stoit in till the loaves

BEAUCHAMP *Grantley Grange* 1, 76

—to have one's **cake all dough**. To have one's plans or expectations miscarry; arrive too late

O, dear, O! My *cake's all dough*,

And how to make it better I don't know! *Warwickshire Folk-rime*  
Our *cake's dough* on both sides. Farewell!

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act i, sc 1.

She is sorry his *cake is dough*, and that he came not soon enough to speed

SLIFLE *Reflections*, Dryden, 4

—to have one's **cake baked**. To be in a position of comfort or in easy circumstances

A Wilsden woman vowed that no man should have her daughter as a wife who hadn't his *cake baked*

*The Leeds Mercury*, Jan 30, 1892

—to take the **cake or bun**. [U. S.] To take or deserve a prize, excel, to win the prize at a cake-walk

As a purveyor of light literature

Mr Norris *takes the cake*

*Pall Mall Gazette*, Sept 2, 1886

—you can't eat your **cake and have it**. You can not enjoy the possession of that which you have already given away

Our own government also

*having gotten their cake, want both to eat and keep it*

WELLINGTON *Gazette* Disp XII 589

—to go like **hot cakes**. [U. S.] To be certain of brisk demand and quick disposal, to go off rapidly

Revolvers and patent fire-arms are selling like *hot cakes*

VICTOR *History of the Southern Rebellion* 1 46

**cake-walk**. [U. S.] The grand march at a negro ball, in which a cake is awarded as a prize for the most graceful and most stylish couple.

**calculate**. [U. S.] To think, guess, reckon

The New Englander *calculates*, the Westerner *reckons* *Yale Lit Mag* XVII, 177

**calends**. The first day of the Roman month—at or on the **Greek**

**calends**. At a date that will never come, the Greeks having no calends.

**calf, golden**. Wealth as coveted or unduly prized.—to worship the

**golden calf**. To frequent or trail in the company of the wealthy, to cater to the rich.

**calf-love**. Childish affection or infatuation, immature or foolish love.

It's a girl's fancy—Just a kind o' *calf's-love*—let it go by

MRS GASKELL *Sylvia's Lovers* II 104

**call**. [Financial] Demand; hence, at or on call. Payable on demand or without notice, as a loan or deposit.

**call at, on or upon, to**. To make a brief stop, visit, or stay. followed by at, on, or upon, as, the steamer *calls at* Southampton.

**call down**. 1. To pray heaven to send 2. To reprove, censure—to call for. 1. To require according to the express terms; as, the deed *calls for* twenty acres.

Our human need *calls for* divine help E. H. CHAPIN *Lessons of Faith* Ser V, p 90

2. To order; demand. 3. To stop to collect in passing, as, to *call for* a friend or a parcel. 4. To need or demand: used of a specific purpose

The crying evil which *called for* instant remedy

RUSKIN *Mod Painters* I 9

Few employments *call for* so much patience

SCRIVENER *Lect Gr Test* 18

**call forth**. To summon into action; draw out.

*Calling forth* by name His mighty angels

MILTON *Paradise Lost* X, 649

He then *called forth* his courage and went up

*Arabian Nights*

**call, get a.** Be invited to take charge of a congregation.

**call, get the.** Die.

**call, give or pay a.** Pay a visit to or call on.

**call in question.** To summon, as for examination; to cast doubt upon; dispute; also, formerly, to investigate into; examine.

This opinion has only recently been *called in question*. BREWSTER *Newton* I VIII 371

**call names.** To vituperate; address abusively; colloquial, abbreviated from *to call out of one's (proper) name, i e*, by other than one's own name.

In the unsophisticated Yorkshire dialect *to call* is to put forth torrents of abuse Dial *Barley*

**call on or upon, to.** 1. To make a short visit to. 2. To present a request or invitation to, as for a speech. 3. See under CALL AT. 4. To ask for a payment from.

**call out, to.** 1. To challenge to a duel. 2. To order into service or action, as, *to call out* the cavalry.

(1) He contrived to be *called out* for a criticism which was too frank and free, even for those times PEABODY *Eng Journal* XI 78

**call over.** To pronounce in order; enumerate.

A gentleman in black proceeded to *call over* the names of the jury

DICKENS *Pickwick* XXXIV

**call over the coals.** To find fault with; to haul over the coals (q v ).

**call to account.** To demand explanation of take to task

He who transgresses them is to be corrected, or, in other words, *called to account* JOWETT *Plato* I 139

**call to order, to.** 1. To require the attention of so as to be able to proceed with business, as in deliberative assembly. 2. To ask or command obedience to a rule of order.

**call God to witness, to.** To declare solemnly before God the truth of a statement.

**call up, to.** 1. To recall to the memory or mind's eye. 2. To bring up for action or discussion, as a legislative measure. 3. To notify to appear before some tribunal, as a court; cite. 4. To summon by telephone.

**calms, in the.** In the course of making; being done or made. from *calm* a heddle of a loom.

**camomile-shark.** A yellowish white moth which when at rest resembles the shark in shape.

**camouflage.** [Fr.] 1. Disguise by masking, as artillery, with an arbor of leaves built around a gun, or as an observer on outpost duty, a sharpshooter, etc, with wisps of straw to conceal his body, etc., a roadway by erecting artificial scenery, imitation summer-houses, etc. See quotation. 2. Hence deception. The word is derived from the Italian *camuffare*, disguise.

A smoke screen provided by destroyers for battleships is *camouflage*, so are cut shrubs and branches piled about a siege-gun to hide it from air-planes, so are the mottled spots painted on the sides of British tanks [and ships], which make them invisible some distance away *The Sun*, New York, Nov 4, 1917

The varieties, then, of *camouflage* are infinite Any little trick that can cause your enemy to see what does not exist, any ruse that will make him think that your guns are here when, in reality, they are there, any cloud of smoke that you can wrap around yourself, like the Trojans of old, when you advance to the attack; any trench upon

which, by means of dummy figures, you can persuade your enemy to waste his ammunition—all such things come under the title of *camouflage*

V B in *The Daily Mail*, London, Aug. 1, 1917

The war has created the art of *camouflage*, an art which is careless of the beautiful, the artist having in view a single duty, that of deceiving the eye

*Le Figaro*, Paris, Sept. 5, 1918

There are two branches [of *camouflage*], invisibility and imitation. A supply-train may look like a row of cottages, that is imitation. A screen tops a great gun so that the green of the screen blends with the grass of the meadow, that is invisibility

*The World*, New York Sept., 1917

**camp-meeting.** [U. S.] An open air religious service, first held by the Presbyterians, but later abandoned by them to the Methodists and Baptists.

**camp out, to.** To live in a tent or a camp, also, figuratively, to lodge in a place, live temporarily, as, to *camp out* on one's relatives.

**camp, to go to.** [Australian.] To go to bed, to take rest; hence, to floor; defeat.

**campus.** [U. S.] College lawn, yard or field in use at Princeton, 1774. Originally the phrase was *in campo*, in the playground, from the Latin *campus*, field. See quotations.

He acted on the present occasion precisely as he might have acted in the *Collegio Campus*, with all the benefits of a fair field and a crowd of backers

W G SIMMS *Guy Rivers* I 189

Without running out to the *campo* (as they term it) at school times

JOHN BRINSLEY *Ludus Litterarius*, p. 299 (ed. 1612)

**canary.** Something from the Canary Islands, as a dance, a wine, a bird.

Used idiomatically in the following phrases

—**kitchen canary** [U. S.] A domestic servant who sings while at work —**Washoe**

**canary.** [U. S.] A donkey, burro, so called by miners

**candle, to burn the.** See BURN.

**candle to, to hold a.** To assist by holding a candle for someone; hence, to help in a subordinate capacity.

Let Plato, then, *hold a candle* to Moses

T ADAMS *Devil's Banquet*, 225

**candle-holder.** An abettor. See SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* act 1, sc. 4.

**candle-light.** [U. S.] Dusk, a favorite time for social gatherings in pioneer days in the American South and West.

From dinner to dark I give to Society, and from *candle-light* to early bed-time I read

THOMAS JEFFERSON *Letter to Kosciuszko*, Feb. 26, 1810

By early *candle-light*, the company began to drop in

SEBA SMITH *Way Down East* 37

**cane-rush or cane-spre.** [U. S.] In some colleges and academies, a contest or rush between the freshman and sophomore classes for the possession of a cane carried with display by a freshman in defiance of the regulations of the higher class.

**canned goods.** Meat, vegetables, fish, fruit, etc., prepared for preservation in hermetically sealed cans.

**canned music.** Music impressed upon phonographic cylinders: in humorous allusion to its "preserved" state.

**canoe, to paddle one's own.** [U. S.] To make one's own way; mind one's own business; row one's own boat.

Voyager upon life's sea, to yourself be true;

And where'er your lot may be, *paddle your own canoe*

*Harper's Magazine*, May, 1845

**canoodle, to.** [U. S.] To bill and coo; exchange endearments; fondle.

He is an adept in that branch of persuasive dialectics known as *canoodling*. He will *canoodle* the ladies, etc. G A SALA *Temple Bar*, Dec., 1864

**Canossa, to go to.** To humiliate oneself, as when Henry IV of Germany went to Canossa to humble himself before Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) in the winter of 1076-77.

**cantankerous.** Quarrelsome, cross-grained, ill-natured.

There's not a more bitter *cantankerous* road in all Christendom

GOLDSMITH *She Stoops to Conquer* act II

**canter, to win in a.** To get the best of or beat easily; excel; win hands down: from the outstripping of its competitors by a race-horse that then canters leisurely to the winning-post.

**Canterbury tale.** A story without foundation in fact; a fictitious yarn: so called from the Tales of Chaucer.

**Canterbury-bells.** A bellflower especially *Campanula medium*.

*Canterbury Bells*, so named by Gerard, from growing very plentifully in the low woods about Canterbury [England], in allusion probably, to the bells so called that were used by pilgrims on their road to and from the Shrine of St. Thomas

Prior *Popular Names of Brit. Plants*, p. 37

**Canuck, Kanuck.** A French Canadian, and in the United States, a Canadian of any origin

**canvas-back.** A North-American sea-duck, named from the wavy or vermiculated dusky markings on the white feathers of the upper parts.

**cap**, as a noun or as a verb, is used in a number of idiomatic phrases as, **a feather in one's cap.** An achievement to be proud of, a thing to one's credit — **cap and bells.** A jester, a fool from the insignia of the professional fool or jester — **cap and gown.** A person of scholarly attainments from the mortarboard cap and loose gown worn as in English universities, and adopted by various scholastic institutions — **cap in hand.** Submissively, reverently from the custom of uncovering the head, as by petitioners seeking favors — **cap-money.** Money collected for the huntsmen on their killing a fox — **cap of fence.** Head-armor — **cap of liberty.** A Phrygian cap — **cap of maintenance.** A state ornament of scarlet velvet and ermine borne before English sovereigns at their coronation, also before the mayors of some cities — **if the cap fits.** If the remark applies or is felt to apply (to one) — **Phrygian cap.** A conical cap with the top turned forward, used in Phrygia considered by the Greeks a characteristic mark of Orientalism, the cap of liberty, an emblem of republicanism — **the cap fits.** The remark applies, or is felt to apply. — **the cap of all.** The chief, the most accomplished

Thou art the *cap of all* the fools alive. SHAKESPEARE *Timon of Athens* act IV, sc. 3  
— **to cap.** To excel — **to cap a quotation.** To cite something superior to that which has already been cited

Now you come to Shakespeare I must *cap your quotation* with another

R. VAUGHAN *Mystics* I, I, v, 32

— **to cap it all.** To surpass all, in addition to everything else — **to cap the climax.** To surpass expectation or what seems to be the limit — **to kiss caps with.** [Scot.] To drink from the same vessel as another person — **to put on one's thinking-cap.** To reflect or consider carefully — **to set one's cap at or for.** To try to gain the affections of (a man) said of a woman matrimonially inclined — **to wear the cap and bells.** To be the butt of a company, as by causing laughter at one's own expense the cap and bells being the insignia of the professional fool

**Cape Boy.** [S. Afr.] A male of a mixed race resulting from the union of the native blacks with settlers and refugees of various nations, a half-caste.

**Cape Cod turkey.** [U. S.] Salted codfish.

**capful of wind.** A light breeze.

**capital** occurs in the following idiomatic phrases: **capital punishment.** The infliction of the death penalty, formerly by beheading — **capital crime.** An offense, as murder, punishable by death — **capital, deadly, or mortal sin.** A grievous

offense against God, depriving the soul of sanctifying grace and involving spiritual death. Theologians hold that in some cases, as theft, the distinction between mortal and venial sin is one of degree and not of kind.

**capital, to make.** To make use of any resource or circumstance that can be employed for an ambitious or self-interested object, as, to make *capital* of an opponent's bad reputation.

**capon.** A fish out of the coop, that is, a chicken—a euphemism used by evaders of the Friday fast. Hence, perhaps, the allusion in *Crail's capon*, a dried haddock, *Glasgow capon*, a salt herring, *Severn capon*, a sole, and *Yarmouth capon*, a red herring.

**captain of industry.** [U. S.] One who undertakes the management of a great industrial enterprise.

**Captain Right.** A fictitious commander implicitly obeyed by the peasantry of south Ireland, in the 18th century.

**Captain Rock.** A fictitious name adopted by the real or imaginary leader of Irish moonlighters, and signed to threatening notices, etc., sent to their intended victims, frequently called also **Captain Moonlight**.

**Captain Stiff over one, to come.** To treat one with studied coldness.

I shouldn't quite *come Captain Stiff over him*, but I should treat him with a kind of air, too, as if—hem! S. WAGREN *Ten Thousand a Year*

**caput mortuum.** [L.] The residue of a distillation or a sublimation; hence, any worthless residue; a death's-head.

Earth, or *caput mortuum* is the last element of all bodies, which can be no further altered by any art whatsoever. SULLIVAN *View of Nature* I 135

The Pietists hailed it as the *caput mortuum* of the speculative school.

FAIRBAIRN in *Contemporary Review*, June, 1876

**card** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases, as, a **cool card**, a self-possessed person—a **big or great card**. A person of importance, a big wig—a **deep or knowing card**. A shrewd person—a **leading card**. The principal player of a cast, the chief attraction—a **loose card**. A ne'er-do-well or worthless scamp—a **strong card**. A person of influence—a **sure or trump card**. A person on whom one can rely—the **card**. The correct thing—to **play one's best or trump card**. To make use of one's strongest argument or chance—to **speak by the card**. To speak from exact knowledge.

We must *speak by the card*, or equivocation will undo us. SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act V, sc 1

"Are you *speaking by the cards*?" said Count Bulow, with the slightest foreign accent.

YATES *Forlorn Hope* I 23

**cards** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases; as **on the cards**, announced publicly as likely to occur, talked about as likely to happen, also, under consideration—to **count one's cards**. To prepare for action—to **count on one's cards**. To rely on one's skill for success—to **fix, pack, put up or stack the cards**. [U. S.] To prepare for a crooked deal, that is, to cheat—to **give one cards**. To give an advantage—sometimes rendered, *to give one cards and spades*.

You know that Artie found a Chinaman out in Frisco who could *give him cards and spades* and beat him out. Toronto *Grip*, May, 1888

—to **go in with good cards**. To begin or engage in with every chance of success—to **have the cards in one's hands**. To be in a position of control—to **hold the cards**. To have the advantage—to **play one's cards badly**. To act without proper judgment—to **play one's cards well**. To act skilfully and judiciously—to **throw up the cards**. To abandon the project—give up as a bad job.

**cardinal.** Of first importance, fundamental chief.—**cardinal numbers.**

Those numbers that directly express how many digits are considered, as one, two, three, four, etc., as distinguished from *ordinal numbers*, first, second, etc.—**cardinal virtues.** Virtues of the first importance or rank, as justice, prudence, temperance, and fortitude, or "natural virtues." By adding the "theological virtues" of faith, hope, and charity we have the seven cardinal virtues of which some modern writers speak—the two classes constituting the *seven cardinal virtues*, in the wide sense.

**care killed a or the cat.** A proverb emphasizing the deadliness of worry, which killed nine lives at once, thus surpassing the brave tailor's "seven at one blow."

"Come, come," said Silver, "stow this talk for the doubloons." *Care killed a cat. Fetch ahead*  
R. L. STEVENSON *Treasure Island*, xxxi

**care a button, cent, fig, pin, picayune, etc., not to.** To have no concern about; be indifferent to.

He *care'd* not for God or man a point

SPENSER *Faerie Queene* I II 12.

I do not *care* a pin for her

MARMION *Fine Comp* II 1 68.

**caricature-plant.** An East-Indian plant with crimson blossoms and varicolored foliage.

**carnal knowledge.** Sexual intercourse.

**carpet, on the.** Under consideration or discussion.

An alliance between France and England, and perhaps between Alençon and Elizabeth, was *on the carpet*

MOTLEY *Dutch Republic* vol III, pt IV, ch 3.

**carpet, to walk.** 1. To be reprimanded. 2. To try to appease, as a peevish child: followed by *with*, as, "we *walked the carpet* with her all night." 3. To be in a perplexed state of mind over something; as "I *walked the carpet* over it for hours."

**carpet-bag era.** [U. S.] The reconstructive period following the American Civil War; hence, **carpet-bag rule, government, adventurers, etc.**

The head of the ticket is one of the most vulnerable men who figured in Southern politics in the *carpet-bag era*. No man of that period left a blacker record.

*The Chicago Record*, 1888

**carpet-bagger.** [U. S.] A Northern man who settled in the Southern States at the close of the Civil War, whose only assets on arriving were contained in his carpet-bag, and who sought to exploit the South to his advantage, commonly used invidiously. So called from reckless speculating bankers of the West, who decamped with funds entrusted to them.

It was a contest against *carpet-baggers*, and when I say *carpet-bagger*, I mean by that thief

WADE HAMPTON *Speech*, Auburn, N. Y., June 19, 1877.

The military government which in this city (Petersburg, Va.) had preceded the installation of the *carpet-bag* and *scalawag*

CLAIBORNE *Seventy-five Years in Old Virginia* 319

**carpet-knight.** One knighted for other than military achievements; a stay-at-home soldier: used derisively.

The subordinate commands fell to young patricians, *carpet knights* who went on campaigns with their families of slaves

FRUDE *Cæsar* ch 4, p 91

All such as have studied law, physic, or any other arts and sciences, whereby they have become famous and thereby have merited honour or dignity from the sovereign

, if it be the King's pleasure to knight any such persons

• they are only termed simply, *mules* and *mulets*, knight or knights of the *carpet*, or knights of the green cloth, to distinguish them from knights that are dubbed as soldiers are, in the field

RANDLE HOLMES *Academy of Armoury*, bk III, p 57

**carriage company.** Persons of distinction. Used to designate a condition of wealth

There is no phrase more elegant and to my taste than that in which people are described as "seeing a great deal of *carriage company*"

THACKERAY *Newcomes* IX

**carry** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases; as, **to carry all before one.**

To overcome every obstacle and opposition; meet with unimpeded and uniform success

That, indeed, *carries everything*, even truth itself, before it

LEIGH HUNT *Jar of Honey* viii, 81



—**to carry away**. 1. To move the feelings of greatly, make beside oneself, as with passion or rapture 2. To break off, lose by breaking off, as in a collision or gale, as, the bowsprit was *carried away*

Womenkind are *carried away* with everything that is showy

STEELE *Tatler* No. 151 ¶2

—**to carry into effect**. To accomplish, put into action, perform —**to carry off**, or **carry it off**. 1. To wipe out of existence, as, he was *carried off* by cholera

A serious cold, which in seven days *carried him off*

SEELEY *Stein* III 559

2. To secure by competition, win

The North Briton *carried off* the palm

PLABODY *Eng Journalism* VII 57

3. To face the consequences boldly, brave out

Frightened too, but *carrying it off*, sir, really like Satan

STEVENSON *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* I 8

—**to carry one or it too far**. To go to extremes, to exceed bounds, to take a chance

The perfect independence of that gentle young lady

might *carry her too far*

BLACK *Princess of Thule* XVIII 280

**carry on**. Continue firmly and steadily, persevere a phrase commonly used in the British army during the World War as an injunction to stick it out, by keeping things on the move and persist in endeavor. Also, said of open flirtations, and loose or wild behavior

Its first application to war we owe to Addison's *Spectator* 1712, and its first nautical use to a writer in *Blackwood's Magazine* for April, 1832 — "Carry on, carry on! Reef none, boy! reef none!"

LEXICOGRAPHER in *The Literary Digest*, Dec. 27, 1919

She and I *carried on* for a whole season People talked

BESANT AND RICE *Golden Butterfly* XXXV

And all that time the clown *carried on* so it most killed the people

MARK TWAIN *Huckleberry Finn* XXII

—**to carry out**. To sustain to the end, accomplish, continue until completed — **to carry the day**. To gain the day, as, in a contest — **to carry the point**. To be successful in or as in anything at issue — **to carry through**. To carry to completion or success, as an enterprise, to sustain or support to the end, as, his impudence *carried him through* — **to carry weight**. To influence, as, "What he says *carries weight* with the Administration"

**cart before the horse, to put the**. To reverse the proper order of things or ideas; get things transposed.

**carte blanche**. [F.] A blank paper duly signed by some person and given to another person to be filled up at his discretion, hence, unconditional permission or authority to do what one pleases in a given matter

Buy any thing you will—do any thing you please—I give you *carte-blanc*

MARIA EDGEWORTH *Moral Tales, Good French Governess*, p. 80

**carve out**. 1. To secure by forcing or cutting apart; as, *to carve out* a way through a dense crowd. 2. *Law*. To create, as, *to carve out* a term from a freehold.

**case**<sup>1</sup>. Skin said of a hare-, rabbit-, or fox-skin As in the proverb "first *case your hare, then cook it*." See a like proverb under **CATCH**.

A rotten *case* abides no handling

SHAKESPEARE *II Henry IV* act iv, sc. 1

**case**<sup>2</sup>. 1. A queer or eccentric character

Every man's hand against him—An Arab of Society As hopeless a *case* my lord judge, as you ever had to deal with

II KINGSLEY *Geoffrey Hamlyn* XLII

2. A love affair or flirtation

He saw people began to make way for him when she was concerned, in short, that they looked upon it as a *case*

HAWLEY SMART *Social Sinners* XXIV

—**in any case**. Whatever may happen, under any circumstances — **in case** (that, or of). If it should appear (that), provided, assuming, if, as, *in case* it rains, do not expect me — **to make out one's case**. To demonstrate what one has asserted — **to put a case**. 1. To state a question 2. To suppose an instance, present a supposed event or condition

**case-hardened.** Hardened like steel, hence, hardened beyond the sense of feeling, indifferent to criticism or condemnation.

**cash in.** Settle up accounts.

**cash or pass in one's checks or chips.** [U. S.] To settle one's accounts, to die from the practise, in poker, of settling at the end of, or on withdrawing from the game, by exchanging the chips, tokens or markers purchased from the banker for currency

How Jimmy Bludsoe passed in his checks,  
The night of the Prairie Belle

JOHN HAY *Jim Bludsoe*

**cast** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases: as, **to cast about** to consider ways and means, observe or seek warily, scheme

I began to *cast about* for the means of obtaining methods of repeating the famous journey to Palmyra

BRUCE *Source of the Nile* intro p li

**—to cast aside.** To reject as worthless, also, to disinherit **—to cast down.** 1. To cause to feel dejection, as, he was much *cast down* by his loss 2. To overthrow

(1) Come Mrs. Malaprop, don't be *cast down* SHERIDAN *The Rivals* act v, sc iii

(2) Henry VIII delighted to show that he could *cast down* and raise up

CHELINGTON *Age of Elizabeth* 22

**—to cast beyond the moon.** To indulge in wild conjectures **—to cast in one's lot with.** To share the good and ill fortunes of **—to cast in one's teeth.** To reproach, upbraid, twit or irritate with (something said or done)

All my faults, set in a note book,

Learned and couched by rote to *cast into my teeth*

SHAKESPEARE *Julius Caesar* act iv, sc 3

**—to cast off.** To drive away, reject as one's own, disown, discard **—to cast one's burdens on the Lord.** To trust oneself to the mercy of God **—to cast oneself on or upon.** To give into or place oneself at the disposal of (another) **—to cast out.** 1. To drive out, expel, to make an outcast 2. [Scot.] To quarrel or disagree

(1) A sorceress *cast out* by her father for his infamous conduct

The Academy, London, June 4, 1887

(2) He's gone to mak four men agree

Wha ne'er *cast out*

RAMSAY *Remin* VI 213

**—to cast pearls before swine.** To bring choice thoughts before an unappreciative audience **—to cast (or throw) sheep's eyes.** To look longingly or desiringly at, to make eyes at, to leer or ogle

That *casting a Sheep's eye* at hir, away he goes, and euer since he lies by himselfe and pines away

GREENE, *Francisca's Fortunes* Wks VIII 191

There was a young lady in the room, and she *threw many sheep's eyes* at a certain person whom I shall not name

SMOLLETT *Red Rover* XVI

**—to cast up.** 1. To compute, reckon, reckon up, calculate, as, to *cast accounts*, to *cast a horo-cope* 2. To upbraid or find fault with some action, reproach

It was to be hoped that he would never *cast at up* to her that she had been going out as a governess

GEORGE ELIOT *Danul Deronda* II. xxxi, 274

**—to have a cast in the eye.** To squint slightly **—to make a cast.** To search for a scent of game **—the last cast.** The last chance, the final venture

Will you turn recreant at the *last cast*?

DRYDEN

**caste.** The division of society on artificial grounds, such as hereditary religious distinctions, privilege, wealth, etc., a social class.

How cruel and unchristian are the pride and prejudice which form the enlightened into a *caste*

CHANNING *Works, Ministry for the Poor* p 77

**—to lose caste.** To lose favor with one's associates in society, be socially degraded A natural fear of *losing caste* among her neighbors

MISS MITFORD *Village* Ser III, 65

**casting vote.** A vote given, as by a presiding officer, to prevent a tie; a deciding vote.

**castles in the air or in Spain.** Visionary if not impossible schemes, projects, etc., whether in Spain or elsewhere.

That *castles in the air*, that croquet, that whimsy BURTON *Anat of Melan* I, III, 1, 2.

There was never a castle seen  
So fair as mine in Spain,  
It stands embowered in green

Its towers are hid in the mists of hope  
And I toil through mists of pain  
Its glimmering gates to gain

JOHN HAY *My Castle in Spain*

**casual water.** In golf, water which has temporarily accumulated on a golf-course, but is not treated as a hazard, except when in a bunker

**cat** is used in many idiomatic phrases, as, **a cat in the meal**, something concealed or underhanded — **a cat may look at a king**. The humblest have some privileges in the presence of the greatest — **all cats look gray in the dark**. All persons are undistinguished until they have made their mark — **cat-and-dog**, but more frequently **cat-and-dog life**. Filled with strife, quarrelsome as a cat and a dog — **cat-footed**. Moving silently and stealthily — **cat's cradle**. A child's game played by means of a loop of string stretched on the fingers, and taken from one player's hands to another's, so as to produce various geometrical figures — **cat's eye**. 1. A gemstone, either chrysoberyl or quartz, which when cut en cabochon shows a line of light across the dome 2. An eye that has an opalescent appearance of the retina like the tapetum of the cat, due to gloma — **cat's foot**. A plant, (1) the ground-ivy (2) A cudweed — **cat's gold**, *n* Stannic sulfid — **cat's-head**. A large green cooking-apple — **cat-silver**. A mica with a silvery luster — **cat-skin**. 1. The pelt of a cat 2. The ruffled appearance caused by a catspaw breeze on the water 3. A silk hat of poor quality — **cat's meat**. Horse-flesh — **cat's-milk**. The sun-spurge — **cat's-nose**. A popular designation of the stormy northwest wind in the Harz mountains — **cat's-purr**. A peculiar thrilling sound heard on auscultation as characterizing certain diseases of the heart — **cat-stane**. 1. A round cairn found in different parts of Scotland and believed to mark battle-sites 2. One of the side stones that support a grate Also, **cat-stone** — **cat-stitch**. Herring-bone stitch — **cat's-tongue**. A slender, worthless oyster, a strap-ovster — **cat-whistle**, *n* The marsh-horselint — **catwise**. After the manner of a cat — **cat-witted**. Small-minded, self-conceited — **gay cat**. One of a gang of thieves who, under various disguises, enter a bank to investigate its condition as regards protection against burglars — **sick as a cat**. Bilious, subject to fits of vomiting such as a cat has — **thieves' cat**. A cat-o'-nine-tails — **to draw through the water with a cat**. To be made a fool of as by playing a practical joke of wagering that the victim can be hauled through water by a cat A rope is tied round the victim's waist, and the end thrown across the pond where it is fastened with a thread to a cat Then, three or four men who are appointed "to whip the cat," seize the end of the rope, and pull their victim through the water, leaving him thoroughly soaked on the other side We hope, sir, that this Nation will be too wise to be drawn twice through the water by the very same cat

*London Gazette*, No. 1725

— **to fight like Kilkenny cats**. To fight to the bitter end, as the two cats which in Irish folklore were tied by the tails and thrown across a wash-line When the fight was over only the tails remained — **to grin like a Cheshire cat**. To make a forced or sneering smile According to Brewer cheese made in Cheshire was formerly molded in forms like a grinning-cat The allusion is to persons who show their teeth when they laugh — **to jerk the cat**. To shoot the cat (4 v) — **to let the cat out of the bag**. To reveal a secret

You needn't look so frightened because you let the cat out of the bag to an old hermit or me

MRS GASKELL *North and South* XLIV

— **to let the old cat die**. To allow a swing to cease oscillating gradually till it comes to a stop — **to live under the cat's foot**. To be hen-pecked or dominated by one's wife, as a mouse under a cat's paw is subject to the cat's pleasure — **to see or watch which way the cat will jump**. To await the turn of events before acting

Had I time, I believe I would come to London merely to see how the cat jumped

SCOTT in *Croker Pap* I XI 319

— **to shoot the cat**. To throw up; vomit, especially after excessive drinking — **to turn the cat in the pan**. To become a turncoat, to reverse one's attitude for gain, to twist one's words

There is a cunning which we in England call, the *turning of the cat in the pan*, which is, when that which a Man says to another, he laies it, as if Another had said it to him

BACON *Essays Of Cunning*

When George in pudding-time came o'er,  
And moderate men looked big, Sir,  
I turned a *cat-in-pan* once more,  
And so became a Whig, Sir

*The Vicar of Bray*

—**to whip the cat.** Same as **to draw through the water with a cat** — **who ate or stole the cat?** Who took the food out of the larder? From the story of a man whose larder was frequently robbed, and who had a cat cooked, and put in it, but that too, disappeared

**catamaran.** A railing virago; quarrelsome woman; common scold.

You old *catamaran*, you pretend never to read novels

THACKERAY *Lovel the Widower* ch. i.

**catch** is used in many idiomatic phrases; as, **to catch (or cut) a crab**, make a foul stroke with an oar, as in missing the water altogether or losing control of the oar

Awful muff! can't pull two strokes without *catching as many crabs*; he'd upset the veriest tub on the river

HOOD *Pen and Pencil Pictures* 144.

—**catch an old bird with chaff, you can not.** An experienced man is not to be deceived with banter or empty words — in allusion to using chaff instead of grain as a lure for birds — **catch as (or that) catch can.** Get as best one may, obtain by hook or by crook — **catch a Tatar or Tartar.** Meet with more than one's match, encounter an unexpected resistance, as when a rogue meets another of his class and is worsted

When men will needlessly barter their freedom for lawless power, sometimes they *catch a tartar*

DRYDEN *Prol. to King and Queen* Wks 456

They say two heads are better than one, so I took a wife and caught a Tartar

BROADSIDE BALLAD (1880)

—**catch a weasel asleep.** [U S] Take a shrewd person unawares or off his guard usually interrogatively — **catch me at it!** I would never do it — **catch or take one napping.** Come upon when off one's guard, take at a disadvantage, surprise, as,

I have taken you napping, gentle love

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act iv, sc 2

—**catch one.** [U S] Grasp mentally, understand, apprehend

"No, no," said Fulkerson, "you don't catch on to this thing"

W D HOWELLS *Hazard of New Fortunes* II, 46

—**catch one's eye.** Meet one's glance, intentionally or otherwise

I hope this paper may catch his eye

BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL XV 228

—**catch one up.** Interrupt abruptly or break in suddenly; heckle

As for thoughtfulness, and good temper, and never being cross and catching

a person up, or getting into rages, there was nobody in the world like Polly.

WALTER BESANT

—**catch the eye.** Attract the attention "Things in motion sooner catch the eye"

SHAKESPEARE *Troilus and Cressida* act iii, sc 3.

—**catch the Speaker's eye.** Secure attention as by attracting the eye of a Speaker: from the practise of so doing in the British House of Commons, to secure the privilege of addressing the House — **catch up.** 1. Snatch or pick up suddenly 2. Loop up, as, her dress was caught up with ribbons 3. Overtake 4. Raise aloft suddenly as, caught up to the third heaven 2 Cor. xii 2 5. Adopt eagerly or quickly 6. [Western U S] Prepare for the march, as horses or mules — **first catch your hare, and then cook it.** One must have possession of a thing before one can enjoy it, the present must prepare for the future The word *catch* here is due to a misreading for *case* See under **case** — **to catch at.** To make a movement of grasping or seizing, figuratively, to receive or attempt to receive something eagerly, as, he caught at the idea

We but catch at the skirts of the thing we would be

OWEN MEREDITH *Lucile* pt I, can 5, st 1.

—**to catch it.** To receive a scolding or a thrashing, be punished

He catches it if he does not give a fair proportion to his wife

BLACK ADVEN. of a Phaeton XVI.

**catchfly.** One of several plants or weeds of which the stem and calyx exude a viscid fluid which holds fast small insects that alight on it The **alpine catchfly** is an ornamental white-flowered species from the Austrian Alps The **autumn catchfly**, from the Caucasus, is purple-flowered

**catchpenny.** An article of little value puffed up so as to attract the gullible.

**catchpoll.** 1. One who arrests for debt; a bailiff

As if they were but matters for under-sheriffs and *catch-poles*

BACON *Works, Essays, Of Praise* vol 1, p 303

2. A tax-gatherer who confiscated poultry when the tax was not paid.

**catch-word.** A popular phrase used by a political party for the advantage of its candidates; as, "He kept us out of War!" "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform!" "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness!"

**categorical imperative.** The impulse or command of conscience to obey the moral law; the supremacy of the moral sense that impels to right living.

**caterpillar.** A power-driven vehicle of the tractor type fitted with two endless belts within which traction wheels are enclosed.

**cat-cornered.** [U. S.] Placed corner-wise or diagonally. Pronounced as if spelt *cattacornered*.

**catfish.** One of several fishes of North-America, as the bullhead, stone-cat, channel-cat, or mud-cat: so called from the purring-sound it makes when caught, from the barbels about its mouth, which resemble a cat's whiskers, or from some other fancied resemblance to the cat. Some of the Mississippi catfishes have been caught that weighed 100 pounds.

**catherine-wheel.** A tire-wheel armed with spikes, blades, or hooks used in the martyrdom of St. Catherine of Alexandria, under Maximinus in 307 A.D. Hence, (1) A circular window, or compartment of a window, with radiating divisions arranged like spokes, a wheel window (2) A rotating fire-work; a pinwheel, especially a large showy one (3) A wheel-like design in embroidery

**catkin.** An ament or scaly-spike of a willow or birch so called from its resemblance to a cat's tail. See CAT-TAIL

**cat-o'-nine-tails.** A scourge made of nine pieces of cord, each with three knots, attached to a rope handle used for flogging

I'll bring him to the gangway, and anoint him with a *cat-o'-nine-tails*

SMOLLETT *Roderick Random* p 70.

**cats and dogs, to rain.** To rain torrentially perhaps in allusion to seamen's reference to the *cat'spaw* (which see) when a gale is anticipated and to the *dog* as symbolic of wind in Norse mythology.

But it rains cats and dogs, and you're fairly wet through

Ere you know where to turn, what to say or to do

BARHAM *Blasphemer's Warning*

**cat's-claw.** One of several flowering plants, as a fabaceous Chinese vine which bears white flowers; a yellow-flowered evergreen climber of tropical South America, or an evergreen mimosaceous tree of the West Indies.

**cat's-ear.** One of various plants bearing leaves that in shape resemble a cat's-ear, as the hairy hawkweed or the mountain-everlasting.

**catspaw.** 1. A tool; dupe: referring to the fable of the monkey that used a cat's (or dog's) paw to draw roasted chestnuts from the fire. 2. A ripple over the surface of the sea presaging a storm. See TO RAIN CATS AND DOGS.

(1) Sir Robert, who had rather begun to suspect that his plebeian neighbor had made a *cat'spaw* of him, inclined his head stiffly

SCOTT *Guy Mannering* LVI

**cattail.** 1. An aquatic herb with downy fruit and long furry spikes from which it derives its name. 2. A catkin. 3. A form of cirrus cloud

4. A tuft of cotton that becomes cord-like or stringy owing to an improper adjustment in cotton-spinning machinery

**cat-whippers, cat-whipping.** [U. S.] An itinerant trader, preacher or teacher who boarded around

**caucus.** [U. S.] A meeting for the purpose of determining a plan of action, held by a group of politicians belonging to the same party

**cause with, to make common.** To support vigorously, side with; aid.

**caution, a.** [U. S.] Something alarming or uncommon; as, the state of the streets is a *caution* — **a caution to snakes.** [U. S.] Something of such singularity as to evoke surprise or elicit remark, something to be remembered for its peculiarity — **caution-money** Money paid in advance as security

**cave-in.** 1. A complete surrender, failure, moral, physical, or financial.

2. The act or process of caving in or yielding

In the end the Government *caved in*, and unconditionally agreed to inquiry

*Punch*, Mar 12, 1887

**caviar.** Originally, pleasing as an acquired taste. In general, displeasing to the masses, hence, unpalatable, as the roe of the sturgeon pressed and salted, as prepared in Russia, because unappreciated by the vulgar taste. Used as a verb in Czarist Russia, the word implied, to prepare for general consumption, censor. In the following quotation from Shakespeare the word "general" is to be interpreted "the people"

The play, I remember, pleased not the million, 'twas *caviar* to the general

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act II, sc 1

Every one of Mr Kennan's articles in the *Century* has been *caviar*

*St James's Gazette* (London), April 25, 1890

**cavort.** [U. S.] To prance, curvet, or caper; to ride or run purposely or heedlessly.

**celestial.** 1. A Chinaman as an inhabitant of the Celestial Empire. 2. [c-] A patron of a theater who sits in the topmost gallery, hence, a gallery god

(1) The *Celestial* inclined his head in grave courtesy

*Christmas Graphic*, London, 1884

(2) One of the *celestial*s visiting Toole's theatre *The Referee* London, Oct 5, 1884

**center of population.** The point in a country on which its map would balance were it made of sheet metal and varied in thickness proportionately to population. Thus, in calculating the center, the distance of a region as well as the number of its inhabitants must be taken into account. The center of population in the United States in 1790 was 23 miles east of Baltimore, Md., in 1890 it had moved to a point 20 miles east of Columbus, Ind., in 1910 it was located in the western part of Bloomington, Monroe county, Indiana and in 1920 at Whitehall, Indiana

FUNK & WAGNALL'S *New Standard Dictionary*

**ceremony.** 1. In the original sense, a formal act, rite, or observance, or a series of them, as on religious and state occasions

Tradition cannot enjoin a *ceremony*, still less establish a doctrine

BANCROFT *United States* vol II, p 88

2. By extension, the observance of polite usages, etiquette or conventional forms, as in social matters, formal civility, adherence to the prescribed forms of amenity — **master of ceremonies.** One who superintends and directs the carrying out of the program on any public occasion — **to stand on ceremony.** To observe the formalities of social customs and practices of polite usage commonly used with a negative, as, I never *stand on ceremony* with him

**certainty, of or to a.** Decidedly, assuredly.

**certify a check, to.** [U. S.] To write or stamp the word "accepted," "certified," "good," or an equivalent upon the face of a bank-check, with the signature of the cashier or the paying teller; thus making a **certified check**, which act is held to certify that the signature is

genuine, and the drawer has enough funds in the bank to meet it, and binds the bank to pay the check.

**chafe.** Irritate; annoy; make angry.

**chaff.** Banter.—to catch an old bird with chaff. See under CATCH.  
—to chaff one. To poke fun at one.

**chained lightning.** [U. S.] Whiskey of the worst grade.

**chair, to go to the.** [U. S.] To go to electricution, in States where, as in New York, prisoners expiate their crimes in the electric chair and are put to death by means of a powerful electric current.

**chair, to take the.** To undertake the duties of chairman or presiding officer.

The committee of the Commons appointed Mr. Pym to *take the chair*. CLARENDON  
**chalk** is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, **by a long chalk**, by a long distance, for a good deal, as, "I can beat him *by a long chalk* (and defeat him easily)," "He wouldn't do that *by a long chalk*" (for a good deal). Derived from the practice of using long chalk to score points —**chalk it up**. Charge it against (one), also, put it to one's credit —**no more alike than chalk and cheese**. There is no resemblance between the two —**to chalk out**. To outline roughly, map out, as a plan — **to chalk the door**. To give notice or warn by making a chalk-mark on a door —**to chalk the lamp-post**. To bribe —**to make chalk of one and cheese of another**. To show favoritism —**to make one walk a chalk line**. To compel one to do what he is told —**to walk a chalk line**. To show that one is sober in allusion to the practice of making seamen suspected of drunkenness walk without stepping aside along a line chalked on the deck —**to walk or stump one's chalks**. [U. S.] To go away, be off.

**challenge, peremptory.** An objection to a juror without stating a cause. Used also figuratively.

**challenge to the array.** [Law.] An exception taken against either a person or a thing, as against a juror or a voter. In the challenge of jurors, objection to the whole panel.—**challenge to the polls**. A protest against certain persons selected for a jury.

Challenges are of two sorts, *challenges to the array* and *challenges to the polls*.  
*Challenges to the array* are at once an exception to the whole panel.

BLACKSTONE *Commentary* III. 359

**chambers, to sit in.** To transact the business of a court in chambers, as a judge.

**chameleon.** A person of changing habits and varying moods. From the lizard that has the power of changing its color to resemble surrounding objects, and is able to fast a long time; hence, **to chameleonize**, to fluctuate in mind and opinions.

**chance** is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, **a fat chance**, a great opportunity, used usually in a depreciatory sense to imply "no chance at all"—**a smart chance**. A great opportunity, also, a large quantity, a great deal.

A considerable quantity is expressed by a *smart chance*, and our host at Madison said there was a *smart chance* of Yankees in that village. DAVID THOMAS *Tiquels* 230  
—**main chance**. The direction in which success, advantage, or profit seems attainable —**to have an eye to the main chance**. To be on the lookout for gain or advantage, to work for one's pocket all the time, usually used invidiously.

**chancery, in.** In a hopeless predicament, as when in boxing one combatant's head is caught and securely held under the arm of his opponent.

When I can perform my mile in eight minutes or a little less, then I feel as if I had old Time's head in *chancery*. HOLMES *Autocrat* ch. 7, p. 191

**chandelle.** [Fr.] In aviation, to "zoom," or make a sudden, very steep leap upward, limited in length and steepness by the power and speed of the aeroplane used.

An approved method of attack was to dive out of the sun at the hindermost Bosche of a Hun formation, shoot him down if you had the luck, *chandelle*, or spiral upwards, and dive again at the next tail-end.

CAPT EDWARD RICKENBACKER in *U S Air Service*, March, 1919

**change** is used in several idiomatic phrases relating to attitude toward a matter, person, or thing, as, **change-key**, a key capable of opening a single lock of a set—**change-of-day line**. Same as **DATE LINE**—**change of life**. The cessation of the menses and of the power of child-bearing in women, menopause—**change of voice**. The gradual change in the pitch and quality of boys' voices occurring about the age of puberty—**on 'change**. In London usage, on the foreign exchange market, by extension, and loosely, on the stock exchange—to **change hands**. To pass to the control of other persons than the owners—to **change one's coat**. See under **coat**—to **change one's mind**. To alter one's opinion—to **change one's tune**. To alter one's manner of speaking—to **change sides**. To shift from one side to the other, hence, to desert—to **give change to**. [Eng.] To render a service to sometimes used ironically—to **put the change upon**. To make things appear other than they are, deceive.

By the light, she has put the change upon him! O sweet womankind! how I love thee for that heavenly gift of lying.

DRYDEN *Sir Martin Marfall* act. II

—to **ring the changes**. 1. To present a theme with all possible variations from bell-ringing, where it means to exhaust the combinations of a peal of bells, hence, to repeat a statement in various ways. 2. To so confuse a person in making change as to swindle him.

(1) They shall only ring you over a few changes upon the three words crying Faith, Hope, and Charity, Hope, Faith, and Charity, etc. EACHARD *Cont Clergy* 62

(2) The culprit had been guilty of ringing the changes, or other petty larceny.

SMART *Social Sinners* XLI

—to **take the change out of** To be revenged on, to take an equivalent often used imperatively.

If his ammunition be exhausted he betakes himself to the bayonet, and swears that the beggars may take their change out of that.

WHYTE MELVILLE *General Bounce* XI

**chantey**. A song sung by sailors when at work, the **chantey man** usually "lining out" the verse, each line being repeated in chorus.

"Then give us one of the old chanteys," exclaimed my uncle. "Haul the bowhne," or 'Whiskey Johnny' "

CLARK RUSSELL *Jack's Courtship* 111

**chap** or **chappie**. [Brit.] A Mid-Victorian beau; a dude, dandy, and man about town.

I'll sing you a new song, all about a fine young spark.

Who's a real "dear old chappie," as I needn't perhaps remark.

PUNCH vol LXXII, p 69

**chapel**. *v.* To turn completely around on the same tack making a circle, as a vessel close-hauled; hence, to **build a chapel**, that is, execute this maneuver.

**chapel, n.** The body of journeymen printers in an office; hence, to **call a chapel**, to summon the various members of a printing plant to a business meeting.

**chapter** is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, the **chapter of accidents**, the series or group of unforeseen events, chances, or mishaps.

The chapter of knowledge is a very short, but the chapter of accidents is a very long one.

LORD CHESTERFIELD *To S Dayrolles* Feb 16, 1753

—to **give chapter and verse**. To state all the details concerning, cite specifically, as in giving exact reference to a passage of scripture, hence, to quote the source or authority for.

She can give chapter and verse for her belief.

THACKERAY *Philip* II, 13

—to **read one a chapter**. To give one a reprimand—to **the end of the chapter**. To the close or very end, as of life or of a course of action.

Questions on which doctors will doubtless disagree to the end of the chapter.

SAINTSBURY *Dryden* 30

**char**. [Gt. Brit.] A piece of work or single job; also, work done by the day, literally, a particular time, turn, or thing to do. Compare **CHORE**—**charwoman**. A woman engaged by the day to do chars.



**character.** A person of striking peculiarities, as wit, dryness, oddity, quaintness, etc.; an odd or peculiar person

Thou, in thy black shape and blacker actions  
Being hell's perfect *character*.

—**in character.** In accordance with the part assumed, hence, in keeping, appropriate  
That would be *in character*, I should think SHERIDAN *School for Scandal* act iii, sc 1

—**out of character.** Not according to the part assumed, unnatural  
It is always Self-ignorance that leads a man to act out of *character*

J. MASON *Self-Knowledge* I. iv.

**charge**, in the sense of "care," "responsibility," is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, **to charge a jury**, to instruct authoritatively as to the duties to be performed — **to charge oneself with**. To take upon oneself the performance of some task or duty — **to give charge over**. To set in authority over. See *Nehemiah* vii, 8 — **to give in charge**. To hand over to the custody of the police — **to have in charge**. To have the care of — **to return to the charge**. To renew an attack, to come back at, as in an argument or discussion — **to take in charge**. To make oneself responsible for

**Charter boys, Charter brothers.** Pupils or pensioners of the Charterhouse foundation, a school and asylum established in London in 1611 in a Carthusian monastery. The school was removed to Godalming, in Surrey, in 1872.

**charter member.** A member of an organization whose name is upon its charter as one of its founders; an original member of a corporation, or of an order or society or branch thereof. — **charter-party.** The instrument of contract of affreightment between owner and freighter for the letting of a vessel or a part thereof, originally, a divided document one-half of which was given to each contracting party. Said to have been first used in England in 1243

**Chartism.** The principles and demands embodied in the **People's Charter**, a document issued in 1838 by English workingmen for the purpose of securing parliamentary reform including universal suffrage, vote by ballot, annual Parliaments, a new system of equal electoral districts, the abolition of a property qualification for Parliament, and a salary for members. Of these vote by ballot was granted in 1872, and something like equal electoral districts by the Reform Act, 1884-1885, and the payment of members in 1911

*Chartism* means the bitter discontent grown fierce and mad, the wrong condition therefore or the wrong disposition, of the Working Classes of England

CARLYLE *Chartism* p 2

—**Chartist.** One who advocates or supports Chartism

**chase, wild-goose.** Pursuit of the unknown or unattainable; a bootless enterprise — **go, chase yourself!** [U. S.] Get or clear out!

**château en Espagne.** A castle in Spain. See CASTLE.

**chawbacon, n.** [Brit.] A country bumpkin; oaf

His companions are all the while laughing at him as an innocent, as a greenhorn, as a *chawbacon*

Cornhill Magazine March, 1863

**chaw up.** [U. S.] To do for or demolish utterly, finish, smash.

Here's full particulars of the patriotic loco-foco Movement yesterday in which the Whigs was so *chawed up*

DICKENS *Martin Chuzzlewit* XVI

We *chawed 'em up*, that's what we did

ARTEMUS WARD *His Book* 66

**cheap** formerly meant "barter," "trade," etc., and was used idiomatically as in **good cheap** and **great cheap**, abundant, hence, of low cost, the first implying "well worth the price asked", the second "of a very low price". The word is used now almost exclusively to mean low cost, as in **cheap and nasty**, worthless and unpleasant — **to feel cheap**. To be out of one's element, or out of place, suffer from a sense of depreciation — **to get off cheap**. To be fortunate in not being subjected to heavy expense, loss, penalty, etc., or to such as one actually deserves

**cheap Jack.** An itinerant merchant; a chapman or traveling salesman. The word is derived from *cheap*, market, bazaar, trade, and is not to be confused with *cheap*, low-price.

Of all the callings ill-used in Great Britain, the *Cheap Jack* calling is the worst used. DICKENS *Doctor Marigold*.

**cheat the gallows.** Escape hanging as a deserved or expected punishment.

**cheat the glass.** Reverse the hour-glass prematurely as in shortening a watch on shipboard.

**checks and balances.** [U. S.] Those provisions in the Constitution that aim to prevent the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches of the Government from becoming preponderant or independent of each other.

Dr Franklin was decidedly averse to the modern doctrine of *checks and balances* *Gazette of the U. S.*, Feb. 18, 1800.

**cheek.** Barefaced impudence, cool assurance, audacity, brass, also, by extension, impertinence, insulting talk, jaw, lip.

**cheek by jowl.** With cheek close to cheek, heart to heart, hence, confidential, intimate.

Destitution must be content often to jog *cheek by jowl* with crime M. E. BRADDON *Trail of the Serpent* II. 1.

**cheer-o' or cheery O!** Be of good cheer! success attend you! the best of luck (to you)! A favorite hail among British soldiers during the World War.

They'll say it when they meet the Hun,  
They'll fire it with the opening gun,  
They'll sing it when the battle's won—

*Cheer-O!*

*Comrades of the Mist*

I have not that alacrity of spirit, nor *cheer o'* mind that I was wont to have

SHAKESPEARE *Richard III* act v. sc. 3.

**cheese.** A low courtesy made by whirling the gown or petticoats around until they are inflated like a balloon or resemble a large cheese, then sinking to the ground. To this deep ceremonial courtesy has been traced the use of **cheese** meaning the correct thing, as, "quite the *cheese*," but it may also be traced to the Hindustani *chiz*, which means *thing*.

Well, I've heard Nudity is not "quite the *cheese*" on public occasions.

CHARLES READ *Hard Cash* II. 186.

—to get the **cheese.** To receive a setback or rebuke, as one who arriving tardily at a formal dinner is invited to have some cheese.

**chef-d'œuvre.** [F.] A masterpiece, a conspicuously excellent production of any kind.

**cherry, to make or take two or three bites at a.** To make great ado about trifles.

I believe he would make *three bites of a cherry*.

RABELAIS in URQUHART'S trans. book V. xxviii.

**Cheshire cat.** See under CAT.

**chestnut.** [U. S.] An old story, stale pun or jest.

Although *chestnut* is commonly supposed to be of American origin, it may here properly be recalled that in the "Broken Sword," a two-act melodrama by William Diamond, produced at Covent Garden Theater, London, in 1825, the following passage occurs:—

ZAVIOR: Let me see—ay! It is exactly six years since that, peace being restored to Spain and my ship being paid off, my kind brother offered me a snug hammock, etc., etc.

PABLO (jumping up): A *chestnut*, captain, a *chestnut*!

ZAVIOR: Bah, you booby!

PABLO: And I swear, a *chestnut*, captain! This is the 27th time I have heard you relate this story and you invariably said a *chestnut* till now.

ZAVIOR: Did I? Well, a *chestnut* be it! SILVA CLAPIN *Duct of Americanisms* p. 108.

**chew** occurs in the following idiomatic phrases: **chew the cud**. To think over, meditate — **to chew the rag or the fat** [Slang] To revert incessantly to, harp on, to nag. See *Notes and Queries* Seventh Series, v, 469, vi, 38.

Some of the "knowing blokes," prominent among whom will be the "grouzers," will, in all probability, be *chewing the rag or fat*.

— **to chew upon**. To ruminate, to meditate upon, weigh and consider. BRUNLEES PATTERSON *Life in the Ranks*

**chicken**. A child, or a young, helpless, or inexperienced girl often used satirically, with a negative, also, euphemistically for one worldly wise; a "broiler," "flapper."

She's *no chicken*, she's on the wrong side of thirty, if she be a day

SWIFT *Works* vol. II, p. 337

— **chicken-hearted, chicken-livered**. Cowardly, wanting in courage, easily frightened, lacking backbone — **to count one's chickens before they are hatched**. To anticipate possession or results before acquisition or achievement

**chiffer-chaffer**. To sing like a cluff-chaff, repeat the same arguments; sing the same song from the notes of the bird.

Let the Labour Party cease *chiffer-chaffing* over things it does not understand

*The Daily Chronicle*, London, Sept. 27, 1918, p. 4

**child** is used in a few idiomatic phrases, as, **child or infant in arms**, a baby that has not yet learned to walk — **a child of God**. A person who has been baptized — **child's play**. Something requiring little or no effort, done or brought about as easily as a child plays — **from a child**. From early age, from *childhood* as distinguished from *babyhood* — **with child**. Pregnant

**Chiltern Hills**. Chalk hills extending through Oxford, Buckingham, Bedford, and Hertford counties, England, once densely forested and infested with robbers, on account of which an official named the Steward of the **Chiltern Hundreds** was appointed by the sovereign (James I.) to protect the people. Application for this stewardship by a member who wishes to resign his seat in the House Commons effects his release, simple resignation being illegal. The custom dates from 1750.

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dict.*

**chime in with**. Be in accord or harmony with

Everything *chimed in with* such a humor in this old mermaid of a city [Venice]

IRVING *Tales of a Traveller* p. 76

**Chinafication**. The act of reducing to a state of utter helplessness, as was China, when pacified by disarmament following the Sino-Japanese War and Boxer Rebellion. Distinguish from **Sinicization**, the act of making Chinese in modes of thought, policy, manners and customs, etc.

*Chinafication* was Theodore Roosevelt's word for the state of complete helplessness to which pacifism would reduce America

*The Literary Digest*, May 31, 1919

**chin-chin**. [Pidgin-Eng.] A term used as a greeting or farewell derived from the Pekinese *ch'ing-ch'ing*, a correlative to English "thank you," or French "adieu."

**chin-clout**. A linen cloth formerly worn around the throat by women.

And from the *chin clout*, to the lowly shipper,

In Heliconian streamers his praise shall dip her TAYLOR'S *Workes*, 1630

**chinook**. [U. S.] A warm, moist wind blowing from the southwest: so called in Oregon and Washington.

The avalanche was caused by the unprecedented snows, which had been loosened by the *chinook*, or warm, westerly wind

*The Standard* March 1, 1910

**chip**. A carpenter, used in various idiomatic phrases, as a carpenter is known by his chips. The quality of one's work is shown by the manner of one's doing it — **a chip of the old block**. A child that inherits the traits of its father — **such carpenters, such chips**. As a workman is, so will his work be — **to have or wear**

**a chip on one's shoulder.** To be ready to fight from the practise, among backwoods-men, of so wearing a chip which was knocked off by one who accepted the challenge

While I had no *chip on my shoulder*, I would yank up the first man who ventured to neglect the least point of etiquette

ADMIRAL EVANS *A Sailor's Log* 264

**chip in.** [U. S.] To contribute money to, jointly with others; participate in some undertaking; unite with, so as to make oneself a party to. From the game of poker, in which one places a chip or chips in the center of the table, thus paying for the privilege of the draw

He was a great loss to this town. It would please the boys if you could *chip in* something like that and do him justice

MARK TWAIN *Innocents Abroad* 22

**chip of the old block.** See under BLOCK.

**chipmunk.** [Amerind] A squirrel-like rodent of the United States which links the ground-squirrel with the tree-squirrel.

**chips, Saratoga.** Potatoes sliced thin raw, then fried crisp.

**chisel.** [Brit. Slang] To swindle; cheat.

**chisel, full.** [U. S. Slang] At full speed.

Then he'd turn and run up the narrow way *full chisel*

MRS H B STOWE *Poganuc p ix* 76

**choke off.** To stop, hinder, or free, as by choking; to silence.

But the gypsy would not be *choked off* until she had finished the patter she had learnt by heart

*Derby Day* 155

**chop.** An exchange, trade, or barter.

I purchased, or more properly speaking, had a *chop* with a wooden bowl maker from Chesham

C HINDLEY *Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack* 140

—**chop-logic.** Hair-splitting argumentation, pretentious and captious disputation, or one given to it—to *chop yarns with.* To exchange stories, cap one tale with another

**chop-suey.** [U. S.] A dish consisting of stewed or fried chicken or pork, rice, noodles, various vegetables, and sesame-seeds served in its own juice.

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dict*

**chore.** [U. S.] A household or farm task; a turn of work such as is done by the day; char.

I would feed my cow and milk her, and do the outside *chores*, while my wife would be preparing breakfast

BRIGHAM YOUNG *Journal of Discourses* iv, 243

**chortle.** To make a noise expressing joy; laugh heartily; chuckle and snort, of which the word is a telescope form.

O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!

He *chortled* in his joy

LEWIS CARROLL *Through the Looking Glass* 1

So may *chortle* the anthropophagi

*The Daily News*, London, Jan 10, 1888

**chowder.** 1. A dish of clams or fish stewed with salt pork, vegetables, biscuits, etc. 2. A picnic, usually on the seashore, where chowder is served. The word originated probably among the fishermen of Brittany and was thence transferred to the coasts of New England and British America, where it is in common use. FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dict.*—**chowder beer,** A beverage made by boiling black spruce in water and adding molasses.

My head sings and simmers like a pot of *chowder*

SMOLLETT *Sir Launcelot Greaves* xvii

**Christmas box.** [Eng.] A gift of money given at Christmastide: so called from the former practise of apprentices, sorters, and others, of making the rounds of their respective master's customers with a money box slit so that coins might be dropped in.

**chronicle small beer.** To take note of trifling events.

**chuck, chuck-farthing, chuck and toss.** Pitch and toss; games in which money is pitched at a line, or tossed in the air to fall heads or tails.

**chum with.** To live in the same room or apartment with another; hence, to be very intimate.

Wits forced to *chum with* common sense

CHURCHILL *Ghost* 441.

Good bye, old rooms, where we *chummed* years without a single fight

TOM TAYLOR *Ten Crown Office Row* II, 57.

**chummage.** [Brit.] A charge for anything shared with a chum, as when a rich collegian pays his companion for the exclusive use of a room they hire in common, or when a new arrival in prison was required to pay his footing or garnish.

The regular *chummage* is two-and-sixpence

DICKENS *Pickwick* xlii

**chummy-car.** [U. S. Slang.] A motor-car built for two; the sort of car that takes the place of the old-fashioned buggy

**chump.** A block of wood; hence, a blockhead.—to be one's chump. To be off one's head

"Master," he said, "have gone off his *chump*—that's all

BESANT AND RICE *Son of Vulcan* II xxiv.

**church.** To baptize—in the right church but in the wrong pew.

Partly right and partly wrong—to go into the church. To take holy orders, be ordained priest—the **churching of women.** The thanksgiving for safe deliverance in childbirth and restored health given by women after confinement

**church-burners.** [U. S.] A member of the Know-Nothing Party, of which no organization in the political sense, survived

I never use offensive language to anybody I did not assail the American Party as *Church-Burners*

MR FLORENCE OF PA. *House of Representatives* Jan 9, 1856

**churchwarden.** A clay-pipe with a very long stem. Called also, an *alderman*, a *steamer*, or a *yard of clay*.

The best pipe is unquestionably what is commonly called *Churchwarden*, or long clay

DR RICHARDSON ON *Tobacco*

**cider, all talk and no.** Much ado about nothing; much cry and little wool.

What we want is *more cider and less talk*

ARTEMUS WARD *His Book* 135

**cinch.** A tight grip; a sure thing; also, something easily done or obtained.

Figurative uses derived from the name of the broad saddle-girth used in the Western United States

Up to within two weeks Keene has proceeded upon the theory that he had a *cinch*, and he had not admitted for a moment the possibility of a second failure

*The Sun* New York Mar 10, 1893

**Cincinnati olive.** [U. S.] A pig. Cincinnati was an important packing center, and manufactured a spurious olive-oil from lard. **Cincinnati oysters.** Pigs'-trotters.

**cinematograph.** A motion picture: abbreviated in England to **cinema** the word was coined by MM Auguste and Louis Lumiere, of Paris, France, and applied to the device by which the motion picture was produced

An exhibition of the *cinématographe*

*The Daily News*, Feb 21, 1896.

**circuit-rider.** [U. S.] An itinerant preacher.

I have to do as all other preachers, especially Methodist *circuit-riders*,—eat chickens

JAMES WEIR *Long Powers* I 153.

**circumlocution office.** A governmental office where much time is consumed by official routine: so called in derision by Charles Dickens.

The *circumlocution office* was beforehand with all the public departments in the art of perceiving—How not to do it  
DICKENS *Little Dorrit* 1

**circumstance to, not a.** [U. S.] Nothing when compared with some other event.

The searing which David Paul Brown Esq. gave W. B. R. in the General Sessions was hardly a *circumstance* to that which he gave him yesterday

Philadelphia *Spirit of the Times* Feb. 24, 1842

**circumstances alter cases.** Conditions modify conduct.

**claim**<sup>1</sup>. A demand as a right—to lay claim to. To assert one's right to the possession of.

**claim**<sup>2</sup>. A part of the public domain marked off by a settler as to be purchased by him when the Government offers it for sale. Hence, to jump a claim, to seize land which has been already occupied, to possess by force or fraud—**claim jumper**. One who jumps a claim.

And if through a mistake  
I jumped a man's claim,

As soon as I knew it,  
I jumped off again.

C. H. SMITH *Hist. of Black Hawk*

**clam**. A shell-fish having a shell that closes like a *clasp*, the original form of the word. Hence, as close as a clam, miserly—as happy as a clam at high tide. Thoroughly happy because free from annoyance—**clambake** [U. S.] A picnic where roasted clams are the principal dish—common in the North Atlantic States where it takes the place of the barbecue (q. v.), and serves as an attraction for great political meetings.

**Clan-na-Gael**. An Irish secret society originating out of the Fenian brotherhood, founded in Philadelphia in 1881 for the purpose of aiding to secure home rule for Ireland.

**clapperclaw**. To slap, scratch, and claw; scold vehemently, abuse.

Now they are clapper-clawing one another, I'll go look on

SHAKESPEARE *Titulus and Cressida* act v, sc. 4

**claptrap**. Cheap unworthy artifice designed to win approval or catch applause.

**claque**. Applause; also, persons paid to applaud; as, the *claque* at the Metropolitan Opera House did its work well.

**claret**. In pugilists' slang, blood, hence, **claret-jug**, the nose.—to tap or broach one's claret. To hit one on the nose.

His fine shirt-frill dabbled with claret drawn from his own little nose

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* lvi

A man's broken nose is his *claret-jug* smashed

Punch vol. xxxvii p. 22

**claw-hammer coat**. An evening dress coat; a swallow-tail—so called from the cut of its tails.

Arrayed in the pride of his heart, his beautiful *claw-hammer coat*

MARK TWAIN *New Pilgrim's Progress* 7

**clay**. Earth, especially as the substance of which man was made according to Genesis I.

I also am formed out of clay

Job xxxiii. 6

How should he return to dust

Who daily wets his clay

FIELDING *New Way to Keep a Wife* act ii, sc. 2

**clay-eater**. [U. S.] "Poor whites" in the South are so called from their use of an edible clay.

The terms "clay-eater," "sand-killer," or "poor white trash" conveyed a terrible reproach, for even the negroes looked down upon them

W. PITTINGER *The Great Locomotive Chase*.

**clay, feet of.** See under FEET.

**clean** is used with different meanings in forming several idiomatic phrases as, **clean bill of health**, see under **BILL** — **clean broke**. Bankrupt — **clean forgotten**. Completely forgotten — **clean gone**. Entirely gone, also, euphemistically, mentally unbalanced — **to clean out**. 1. To take all the money or means away from 2. To empty, to leave bare, to exhaust

(1) He has *cleaned me out*, but I can go and earn some more

DICKENS *Oliver Twist* XXXIX

(3) The larder was utterly *cleaned out*

W. H. MAXWELL *Sports and Adven. in Scotland* IX

— **to come or go in with clean hands**. To enter with unsullied reputation — **to have a clean heart**. To be righteous in spirit — **to grow clean out of knowledge**. To have so changed as to be quite unrecognizable — **to keep one's hands clean**. To avoid being involved in — **to live a clean life**. To lead a blameless life — **to make a clean breast of**. To unburden one's mind by full confession — **to show a clean pair of heels**. To escape by flight — perhaps from the idea of running so rapidly that no mud or dust can gather on the heels

**clear** is used in the sense of remove in the following idiomatic phrases, as **clear away**, remove — **clear off!** Go away — **clear out**. 1. Remove the contents of, empty 2. Be off! get out! — **to clear the air**. To remove the doubts from the mind of — **to clear the court**. To order the public out of court — **to clear the decks for action**. To prepare for battle or active hostilities by removing all possible hindrances. Hence to dispose of all impediments so as to be able to proceed with business to be done — **to clear the dishes**. To take the dishes away — **to clear the room**. To empty a room of persons or contents — **to clear the table**. To take away what is on a table — **to clear up**. 1. To become fine after rain of the weather 2. To explain so as to remove ambiguities, make manifest

**clever**. [U. S.] Good-natured, obliging, amiable, pleasant, as opposed to ready, adroit, quick-witted, capable, dexterous.

**clew to earing, from**. From bottom to top, throughout, thoroughly.

**click** (*n.*). 1. A sharp, unexpected blow, dig, or wipe. 2. A sharp, sudden pain.—**click** (*v.*). To inflict a sudden blow on; be hit as with a bullet; hence, to wound; injure.

**climacteric, grand**. One's sixty-third year. A **climacteric period** is a stage in the course of human life in which certain physical changes are supposed to occur. The **climacteric years** are indicated by multiples of 7, by multiples of 9, or by the multiplication of 7 by an odd number. Among the ancient Greeks five climacteric periods were recognized—the 7th, 21st, 49th, 63d and 81st years of man's life.

**climb down**. A descent or a withdrawal as from a position held but rejected as no longer tenable — **to climb down**. To withdraw from a position held or to recall a statement that can not be substantiated

**clinch**. To establish conclusively as an argument, confirm, as an action.

**clinical convert**. A person converted on a sick-bed or death-bed.

**clip the wings of**. To check the aspiration or ambition of; disable.

**close-mouthed**. Uncommunicative; reticent.

**close on or upon**. To come to a common agreement; agree in, on, or with.

— **close out**. To sell the stock of a business so as to wind it up — **close with**. 1. To accept or consent to an offer or agreement, to act in agreement with 2. [Naut.] To draw near to land

**close season**. That part of the year in which it is unlawful to catch or kill certain varieties of fish and game.

**close to the wind, to sail**. To take great risk.

**close up**. A motion picture at close range projected to advertise the stars without regard to the story filmed.

**cloth, the**. The clerical office; the clergy as a class; as, he is an honor to the *cloth*.

Like all orthodox divines, he was tenacious of the only sensual enjoyment permitted to his *cloth* MARRYAT *Peter Simple* 1

**clothes, long.** The first clothes worn by an infant, extending beyond the feet; hence, **in long clothes.** Undeveloped

**cloud, under a.** In disrepute, out of favor, under suspicion.

**clouds, in the.** In the realm of the unreal or fanciful; visionary; up in the air, above the range of ordinary understanding.

**cloudburst.** [U. S.] A heavy downpour of rain.

This deluge, which they call the *bursting of a cloud*, took place in October, 1784

DWIGHT *Travels* III, 249

**cloven foot or hoof, to show the.** To betray a satanic purpose or character, the devil being represented as having cloven hoofs: an idea borrowed by the Early Church from representations of Pan

**clover, to be or live in.** To live in abundance or luxury, as cattle in a clover-field

Luck doesn't express it . . . You're *in clover*, knee-deep

HOWELLS *Shadow of a Dream* ch 4, p 28

**clover to rye, to go from.** To step from luxury to competency or from a good to a poor position: applied to a woman who has made a second and worse marriage than was her first.

**coach and four, or six, to drive or ride in a.** To enjoy great wealth, as implied by the possession of such an equipage

"This," said he, "is a young lady who was born to *ride in her coach-and-six*"

HENRY MACKENZIE *Julia de Roubigne*

—**to drive a coach and four through.** To find a safe means of evading a law or breaking an agreement

This man (Dice) was often heard to say before he came to be a judge, that he would *drive a coach and six* horses through the Act of Settlement WELWOOD *Memoirs* 230

**coal figures in several idiomatic phrases; as, to blow the coals, to fan** dissension, cause strife, excite hostility —**to call or haul over the coals** To bring to account, reprimand, punish —**to carry coals to Newcastle.** To take goods to a place where they already abound, hence, to throw away one's labor —**to heap coals of fire on one's head.** To shame one by returning good for evil See *Romans* xii and *Proverbs* xxv 21-22

**coast, clear the.** Get out of the way: always imperatively.—**the coast is clear.** There is no one about, the way is open, there is no danger, the enemy has gone Hence, **to clear the coast.** To remove obstacles

With these distinctions, he says, he *clears the coast*, whereas in truth, he darkens his meanings

HOBBS *Liberty* 57

**coat is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, coat of arms, the device** in heraldry or armorial bearings of a family from a surcoat on which these were charged —**coat of fence.** A heavily quilted garment used as armor —**coat of mail.** A garment made of chain-mail used for defense —**to change or turn one's coat.** To change one's opinion or support to the opposite side, be or become a turncoat —**to cut one's coat according to one's cloth.** To act in conformity with one's circumstances, live within one's means

Conform thyself then to thy present fortune, and *cut thy coat according to thy cloth*

BURTON *Anat Melancholy* p 365

—**to dust one's coat or jacket.** To give one a thrashing

**cobbler should stick to his last, a.** One should meddle only with matters with which one is familiar.

**cock (n.).** The male of the domestic fowl is dedicated to Apollo because it crows at the dawn of day (**cockcrow**) and to Mercury because it summonses man to work The word is used in several idioms and idiomatic phrases, as, **cock-a-hoop:** Elated, set up, on the high horse, boastful, defiant, also, tipsy; carousing —**cock-and-bull.** Highly improbable, incredible, absurd applied to stories; as, a *cock-and-bull*



story of a miraculous escape origin uncertain —**cock of the walk** or **of the loft**. One who has overcome all opposition and thus become leader or chief —said of a swaggering or overbearing person, but sometimes employed with a diminutive in affectionate familiarity —**every cock crows on its own dunghill**. Every one can brag in his own house, every one is brave on familiar ground or when surrounded by friends —**Gallie cock**. The French people collectively, the cock being the national bird of France as the eagle is of the United States —**that cock won't fight**. That plan will not work, that answer will not do, that story will not bear investigation.

"Tell that to the Marines, Major," replied the valet, "*that cock won't fight with me*."

THACKERAY *Pendennis* XLVII

—**to live like a fighting cock**. To be fed or to feed luxuriously.

**cock** (v). To lift, stick, or turn up, is used in the following idiomatic phrases —**cock the ears**. Prick up the ears, listen attentively —**cock the eye**. To glance (at) —**cock the hat**. To set the hat at an angle on the head as in an effort to look more knowing than one is —**cock or cock up the nose**. To turn one's head so as to raise one's nose, as in contempt or to indicate dislike —**cock up the head**. To raise the head, as in pride —**to cock or turn up the toes** [Slang] To die —**to go off at half-cock**. To act impetuously and without proper preparation.

**cocked-hat, to knock or to be knocked into a**. To be battered or knocked completely out of shape, made limp enough to be carried flat, like an officer's cocked hat from a game of bowls with three pins set up at the angles of a triangle.

When, in bowling ten pins, all were knocked down except the three at the corners, the set was said to be "*knocked into a cocked hat*," whence the popular expression for depriving anything of its main body, character, or purpose. *New Standard Dictionary*

Would that we could do something at once dignified and effective to knock Mr Bryan once for all into a cocked hat.

WOODROW WILSON *Letter to John*, quoted in *The Literary Digest*, Jan. 20, 1912

**Cocker, according to**. According to accepted rules, correctly reckoned. from an *Arithmetic* by Edward Cocker (1632-1675) which ran through 112 editions. Compare HOYLE

**cock-fighting, that beats**. That is too extraordinary or improbable to be true; that surpasses everything, as did the stories of cock-fights, when the sport was in vogue. Compare FISH STORY.

**cockhorse**. A hobby-horse or a rocking-horse used by children —**to ride a cockhorse**. 1. To sit astride of the foot of a person's crossed-leg while he moves it up and down. 2. To ride a hobby, carry out a favorite plan.

**cockles of the heart**. The inner chambers of the heart.—**to cheer or warm the cockles of one's heart**. To bring great comfort to, give pleasure.

Polyglot tossed a bumper off, it cheer'd the cockles of his heart.

COLMAN *The Younger Portraiture Vagaries*, p. 147

"There, Mr Wood," cried David, pouring out a glass of the spirit and offering it to the carpenter, "that'll warm the cockles of your heart." AINSWORTH *Jack Sheppard* 49

**Cockney**. A Londoner. "Applied only to one borne within the sound of Bow-bell, that's within the City of London." JOHN MINSHEU *The Guide into the Tongues* p. 80. col. 2. (1617) Hence, one raw or unripe in countrymen's affairs.

That synod's geography was as ridiculous as *Cockneys* (to whom all is Barbary beyond Brainford, and Christendom endeth at Greenwich).

WHITLOCK *Zootomia* 221

*Fool*. Cry to it, nuncle, as the *cockney* did to the eels, when she put them i' the paste alive, she knapp'd 'em o' the coxcoins with a stick, and cried, "Down, wantons, down!"

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act II, sc. 4

It is almost impossible to distinguish Americans from English, especially Philadelphians, who like *Cockneys*, talk about *very good weed and winegar*.

N. DANA *A Mariner's Sketches* (1830)

—**Cockneyism**. A peculiarity of manner or speech common to a Cockney.

**Cockpit of Europe.** Belgium, because within its territory many wars have been waged and battles fought.

Those parts of Belgium and Northern France over which were now to march, for weary years, the armies of Germany and the Allies, had long been known as the *Cockpit of Europe*. They had been battle grounds from the earliest times.

FRANCIS W. HALSEY *The Literary Digest History of the World War* vol. 1, p. 248.

**cocktail.** [U. S.] An appetizing drink composed of spirits (gin, brandy, rum or whisky) bitters (vermouth, angostura, absinthe, etc.), sometimes sugar and fruit juice and chopped ice. Popular varieties are the *Alexander, Bronx, Clover Club, Manhattan, Martini, Presidente*, etc.

They (Dutch-Americans) lay claim to be the first inventors of the recondite beverages, *cock-tail*, stone-fence, and sherry-cobbler. W. IRVING *Knickerbocker* p. 241

**cocoanut, the milk in the.** The gist of a matter.

**cocoa slops.** The propaganda literature circulated in Great Britain during the World War by owners of cocoa-plantations or by cocoa-kings.

**C. O. D.** [U. S.] Collect (or cash) on delivery.

**codfish aristocracy.** [U. S.] Those persons who, lacking in culture, make a vulgar display of lately acquired wealth formerly applied to families said to have grown rich out of the fisheries of Massachusetts, where the "sacred" codfish hangs in the State-house.

We should regard it as somewhat strange if we should require a *codfish aristocracy* to keep us in order. MR. BUTLER of South Carolina in U. S. Senate, July 6, 1850.

**co-ed.** [U. S.] A girl educated in an institution where students of both sexes are received.

University of Chicago *co-eds* will carry their suffrage enthusiasm into the theatre district Friday and Saturday. *The Evening Post* New York, March 31, 1910.

**coin money.** To prosper in business; to earn money rapidly and with ease.

For the last four years I literally *coined money*.

KEMBLE *Residence in Georgia* 105

**coin, to pay one back in his own.** To treat in the same way as one has been treated.

**Colchester clocks.** Oysters of large size.

For the big, uncompromising *Colchester clock*, which we see on stalls and shudder at, with unlimited vinegar and pepper, the East-ender willingly gives his penny.

*The Daily Telegraph* London, Sept. 13, 1865.

**cold.** Distant; frigid; unenthusiastic.

**cold as a wagon tire.** Absolutely cold, dead.

You're no account, to be afraid of a dead bear. I've used him up the right way. He's as *cold as a wagon tire*.

JAMES HALL *Legends of the West* 88

**cold blood.** See under BLOOD.

**cold, catch or take.** Be affected with a chill, as from exposure to damp or to a draft.

**cold deck.** [U. S.] Stacked or marked playing-cards prepared to swindle an unwary player.

I have never gambled from that day to this without a *cold deck* in my pocket. I cannot even tell who is going to lose in games that are being played, unless I deal myself.

MARK TWAIN *Screamers*

**cold pig, to give.** To awaken a sleeper either by pulling off the bedclothes or by dousing with cold water.

Then he came back rosy and hungry, and revenged himself by an administration of *cold pig* to the still slumbering Ralph.

W. BRADWARD *The O V H XXXV*.

**cold shoulder, to give, show, tip, or turn the.** To treat with contempt or neglect; snub; cut.

I must *tip him the cold shoulder*, or he will be pestering me eternally

SCOTT *St Ronan's Well*. XXX.

**cold snap.** [U. S.] A sudden drop in temperature.

There was a *cold snap* in which Fresh Pond was frozen over

W. T. WASHBURN *Fair Harvard* 150.

**cold turkey, to give.** Deprive suddenly of narcotics, said of an addict who is denied a drug under treatment for his cure.

**cold, to leave out in the.** To neglect deliberately; shut out, abandon.

**cold water on, to throw.** To discourage, as by indifference; as, he *threw cold water on all our projects*.

**cold without.** [Brit.] Spirits mixed with cold water without sugar.

I laugh at fame. Fame, sir! not worth a glass of *cold without* LYTTON *My Novel* i.

**collar** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases in which the word is usually employed in its relation to occupation or harness, as, **against the collar** With collar strained against the shoulders by pulling, hence, facing difficulties or hardships — **in collar.** In employment or in good trim, in harness, also, ready, prepared, as for a task — **out of collar.** Out of work

**to collar.** To take without leave, also, to seize, capture — **to slip the collar.** To get out of harness or restraint, avoid or give up work already begun — **to wear the collar.** To be subject to another's bidding, to lack freedom of action antithesis of *to have the whip-hand*.  
Your gentler birth and bringing up makes the collar so hard to wear

MANNING *Old Chelsea Bun-house* VII 108.

**collide.** To come into conflict, clash with.

Literary style has its place, and Latimer had his, and when they *collided* the old-fashioned homilist always won the day T. W. HUNT in *Homiletic Review* May, 1889.

**color** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases, as, **change color:** Blush or turn pale.

Canst thou quake and *change thy color* SHAKESPEARE *Richard III* act iii, sc 5.

—**describe in dark colors.** To present the disheartening or gloomy side of — **desert one's colors.** To abandon one's interests, give up — **give or lend color to.** Invest with the appearance of truth or reality — **paint in bright colors.** Describe in glowing terms, point out all the advantages of while deliberately ignoring the unfavorable side.

—**put a false color on.** Misinterpret deliberately, or put a different construction on.

—**see things in their true colors.** Understand matters as they actually are — **show one's true colors.** Reveal one's real character — **to wear one's colors** To take one's part, come to one's support — **under color of** In pretense, as, *under color of friendship, authority, etc.*, with a show of friendship, authority, etc — **with the colors.** In the army, serving with the regulars and not with the reserves

**colored.** 1. [U. S.] Of African descent, wholly or in part. 2. [Brit.] Descended from any dark-skinned race. 3. Exaggerated embellished; disguised; dissemble.

The facts are inaccurately stated and improperly *colored*

J. JAY in Sparks *Correspond during American Revol* IV, 135.

Armed bands who had *coloured* their brigandage under the name of patriotism

MERIVALE *Fall of the Roman Empire* VII, lxx. 206

**colt's teeth, cast one's.** Forsake youthful ways; settle down in allusion to the period of a colt's life when its passions are strongest. Opposed to *sow one's wild oats*.

**comb one's hair or head.** Take down; humiliate; also, to dress down; beat; thrash.

Doubt not her care should be to *combe your noddle* with a three-legged stoole

And paint your face, and use you like a fool

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act i, sc 1.

—**cut one's comb.** Lower the pride of, take the conceit out of, tame derived from cock-fighting —**set up one's comb** Be self-assertive, conceited or snobbish  
**ome** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases; as, **come about:** Turn out, take place, happen, circumvent

How *comes it about* that the operations of Sense and Reason vary so much?

COLLIER *Essays* II, 90

In common language they say to *come about* a man, 'to circumvent him'

JOHNSON *Dict Eng Lang*

—**come across.** [U S.] 1. Own up, pay up, an imperative demand to make a clean breast of a matter, to tell the whole truth about it, also, peremptorily, a demand for the payment of a debt or the meeting of an obligation 2. To encounter unexpectedly; meet by chance, cross the path of —**come and go upon.** To pass to and fro, exercise liberty of action; afford leeway or room for action —**come-on.** [U S.] A simple-minded trustful person, the victim of a confidence man or bunco-steerer, a greenhorn, a lamb —**to come on.** 1. To advance, make progress, thrive, develop, as, the business comes on well 2. To move toward with hostile or friendly intent —**come seven, or eleven!** An invocation addressed by a player at African golf or craps to the goddess presiding over games of chance that the dice fall showing these numbers —**to come at.** 1. To come near enough to reach, hence, to get possession of, attain, grasp, understand, as a meaning 2. To make for, attack —**to come away.** To part, as from a fastening, slip or break —**to come back.** 1. [Colloq.] To return former physical condition, form, and skill, as in pugilism or athletics, by training 2. [Sporting.] To lose ground, as in a race 3. To return —**to come between.** To intervene intentionally, hence, figuratively, to alienate or estrange —**to come by.** 1. To pass near

How *came she by* that light?

SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* act v, sc 1.

2. To get by chance, gain, acquire, as money

This gold is honestly *come-by.*

BUCHANAN *Love Me Forever*, II, v, 130

—**to come down.** 1. To descend as by inheritance 2. To be reduced or humbled used also substantively 3. To pay down money, also, to tip

(2) This was a great *come-down*, from the highest seat in the synagogue to a seat in the gallery

R. DANA *Before the Mast* XXVIII

(3) Selcove would be certain to *come down* handsomely, of course

*Macmillan's Magazine*, 1886

Did he tip you handsomely? How much did he *come down* with?

GAY *Beggar's Opera* act iii, sc 1

—**to come down on or upon.** [Colloq.] To fall upon heavily, severely, or unexpectedly; hence, to berate, assail, also, to call for the immediate payment of money borrowed or due —**to come high or low** To be held or sold at a high or low price —**to come home.** 1. To return to one's house, family or country 2. To touch one's interests or feelings

No poetry was ever more human than Chaucer's, none ever *came* more genially and frankly *home* to its readers

GREEN *Short Hist Eng People* p 287

3. *Naut.* To slip from its hold said of an anchor when, instead of the vessel being hauled up toward it, it is dragged toward the vessel —**to come in.** 1. To consent, comply, yield 2. To be brought into use, or observance, as, the style *came in* with Queen Anne 3. To enter a room, house, field, or arena 4. To arrive 5. To come into hand, as revenue or receipts 6. To ripen or mature, as crops 7. To be elected, assume the duties of office

A character for public speaking which must inevitably lead, whenever the Whigs should *come in*, to a seat in the British Senate

*New Monthly Magazine* XIV 15 (1825)

—**to come in clipping-time.** [Scot.] To visit a farm when the sheep are being sheared, — a time of merry-making, hence, to arrive opportunely —**to come in for.** To be in the way of receiving, fall heir to, also, to claim, as, this heir *comes in for* \$10,000 —**to come into.** 1. To inherit 2. To agree to 3. To take part in —**to come into the world.** To be born —**to come in with.** 1. To interrupt suddenly 2. To overtake, join —**to come in unto.** [Bib.] To have sexual intercourse with (*Gen xxxviii, 16*) —**to come in upon.** To be borne in upon, to enter one's mind —**to come it.** [Colloq.] To manage something, as, you can't *come it* —**to come it over.** [Colloq.] To get the advantage of, cajole, deceive —**to come it strong.** To overdo, exaggerate

It's my 'pinion that you're *a comin'* it a great deal too strong, as the coachman said to the snow-storm, ven it overtook him

DICKENS *Pickwick* 356

In his sleeves, which were long  
He had twenty-four packs,  
Which was *coming it strong*

BRET HARTE *The Heathen Chinee*

—to come near or nigh. 1. To resemble closely, be of about the same kind or quality, be worthy of comparison. 2. To escape narrowly, be on the point of, as, he came near falling into the pit —to come of. 1. To be descended from, as, he comes of a good old stock. 2. To happen because of, result from —to come of age. To attain one's majority —to come off. 1. To pass or part from, depart. 2. To happen, pass off, occur, take place, as, the match came off last week. 3. To emerge from action, discussion or trial, acquit oneself, as, he came off with honors.

He had come off victorious in every action in which he had been engaged

SCOTT *Tales of a Grandfather*, Series III, xxiii.

4. To escape; get clear, be acquitted, as, he came off without a scratch. 5. To become; as, the weather came off pleasant. 6. To slip off; separate from; slough. 7. To cease fooling; desist; besensible or serious used in the imperative, chiefly in the expression *oh, come off!* —to come off the grass. [U S] To desist, usually used imperatively to imply doubt, with an invitation to stop spoiling what one has already said or done in allusion to the spoiling of a lawn when the grass is trodden down —to come on the parish. [Brit Prov] To become dependent on the charity of the parish and be provided for out of the poor-rates

So Betty came upon the parish with all her children *Tait's Mag.* XVII 336  
—to come out. 1. To result, end, as an enterprise. 2. To be disclosed, be made public. 3. To make a public appearance, as in society, or on the stage, in England, also, to be presented at court. 4. To appear, as an eruption. 5. To declare oneself; take sides, as, he has come out for the president. 6. To be published, as a book —to come out at the little end of the horn. [U S] To fare badly, to be at the smaller end of the horn of plenty —to come out with. To make public, proclaim, announce, as a manifesto —to come over. 1. To pass from one side or from one party to the other, as, to come over from the Liberals. 2. To take possession of; as, a fear came over me. 3. To pass over in distillation, as vapor. 4. [Colloq] To circumvent, get the better of

I lately came over him for a good round sum *Gentleman's Magazine* 1085 (1794)  
—to come over to. To join —to come round. 1. To occur or take place as expected. 2. To agree, consent, or fall into line after opposition. 3. To revive, recover, be restored. 4. To influence craftily, as by persuasion or wheedling, hoodwink —to come short. To be insufficient, fail —to come short of. To fail of attaining, miss —to come the old soldier over one. To deceive or impose upon one —to come to. 1. To recover, revive, be resuscitated, as from a faint. 2. *Naut.* (1) To anchor. (2) To bring the ship close to the wind. 3. To turn shortly to the left; said of an ox-team or horse-team. 4. To amount to, as, the bill came to five dollars. 5. To pass to the possession of, as property. 6. To result in; as, if things come to the worst —to come to a head. 1. To reach the stage of supuration, as a boil. 2. To come to an issue or climax, as affairs which have been undecided —to come to anchor. ¶ To cast anchor —to come to close quarters. 1. To get into immediate contact. 2. To fight hand to hand —to come to grief. To turn out unfortunately or disastrously.

As for coming to grief, we're on a good errand and the devil himself can't harm us

KINGSLEY *Two Years Ago*, ch. xxi.

—to come to hand. To be received —to come to heel. To keep at the heels, as a dog —come to light. To be discovered or understood, disclosed —to come to mind. To occur to one, be remembered —to come to oneself. To recover one's senses or the exercise of sound judgment —to come to pass. To take place, occur —to come to the front. To attain prominence, as in time of danger or difficulty —to come to the point, scratch, mark, or chalk. To reach the vital or essential matter under discussion, to speak plainly and directly, to avoid circumlocution or beating about the bush from the practise of toeing the mark or scratch in a prize-fight or at the starting-point of a race as by contestants or combatants. Hence, to fulfil one's engagements; comply with rules or requirements —to come to time. To be on hand when "time" is called said of combatants in the prize-ring or of any contestants in sports, hence, to be prompt in keeping an engagement or discharging an obligation —to come true. 1. To occur as expected. 2. To be like its parent, as a plant grown from seed —to come up. 1. To arise, come into view, use, or discussion, as, the question came up. 2. To spring up, appear in sight, as a plant.

The time-honored prescription, "Plant a primrose upside down, and it will *come up* a polyanthus." MRS EWING *Mary's Meadow* xi, 66

3. *Naut* (1) To come closer to the wind, as a vessel (2) To loosen a rope or make it slack —to **come upon**. To chance upon, fall in with, descend upon, attack —to **come upon the town**. To be supported by the town, to become a pauper, also, to become a prostitute —to **come up smiling**. To face disaster cheerfully, to laugh at punishment a phrase from the prize-ring

One *comes up smiling* and ready for the next round

—to **come up to**. To equal or rival, attain, amount to —to **come up with**. Mc CARTHY AND PRAED *Right Honourable* II xv

1. To overtake; 2. To get even with, as in revenge

**come-uppance, come-uppings**. One's deserts

Well, I did get my *come-uppings* that time

W D HOWELLS *Landlord at the Lion's Head* xxi  
**comforter, Job's**. One who professes to comfort, but does the opposite.  
**commandeer**. [S.-Afr. Dutch.] To requisition for military purposes; a term brought into use during the Boer War

**commission**, designating authority, is used as **in commission**. 1. Exercising delegated authority, appointed by warrant to the charge of 2. Ready for sea and under command of a designated officer, as when a war-vessel is armed and equipped for active service Also, to **put into commission**.

At the expulsion of the Tarquins the monarchy was *put into commission*

MAINE *Ancient Law* III 62

**commit for contempt**. See CONTEMPT OF COURT

**commit to memory**. Learn by heart; memorize.

**commit to writing, to paper, etc**. Write down so as to have a record for preservation.

**common**. Normal; ordinary; shared alike; free to be used by all persons; public, as, **common carrier**: A person or company that undertakes to carry persons or goods for pay when called upon to do so, whether by land or by water —**common soldier**. An invidious designation for a private or enlisted man Sir James A H Murray says (s v) "Ludlow mentions it as an example of the growing insolence of the Parliamentary army, that the men would no longer be called *common* but *private* soldiers. The latter is now the official expression" *New English Dict* vol II, p 689. —**common woman**. A courtesan, prostitute —**in common**. Equally with another or with others, in equal shares or participation, equally with or among all, general; commonly.

*Jack Cade*. There shall be in England seven halfpenny loaves sold for a penny, the three hooped pot shall have ten hoops, and I will make it felony to drink small beer. All the realm shall be *in common*, and in Cheapside shall my Palfre go to grass

SHAKESPEARE II *Henry VI* act iv sc 2  
—**out of the common**. Out of the usual run of things, extraordinary —**the common people**. The populace, the masses —**the common right**. The right of every citizen under the common law

Let *common right* be done to all, as well poore, as rich LAMBARDE *Even* I, iii, 9.  
—to **make common cause with**. To take the same side with, engage with  
Epirus will *make common cause with* Thessaly

BREMER's *Greece* II, 14. HOWITT's *trans*

**commons**. Provisions for a company in common; hence, allowance of food, rations, fare, as, **on short commons**. Having insufficient food or scanty fare. Our sick have been *on short commons* for the last five days

KANE *Arctic Explor* II, ii, 37

**commutation ticket**. [U. S.] A railway or other ticket entitling the person to whom it is issued to a stated number either of passages between two stipulated points, or other services at a reduced rate in consideration of increased patronage.

**commuter**. [U. S.] One who uses a commutation ticket; a suburbanite.

**company** is used for companionship and association in various phrases; as, **bad company**. Evil associations, also, persons of uncompanionable qualities — **good company**. Pleasant companions or associations — **to keep company with**. To accompany, associate with, frequent the society of, be attentive to or receive the attentions of, as a lover a classic English phrase. See Shakespeare *Othello* act iv sc 2.

**compare notes**. Make a comparison of relative differences; exchange views; discuss or consider opinions; call attention to variations as of ideas.

We will *compare notes* three years hence, and I hope I shall convince you that you were mistaken.

MISS BRADDON *One Thing Needful* IV.

**complex-phobia**. A morbid dread of the complex or group of mental contents consolidated into a unit mass a condition said to attack the intellectuals of Advanced Thinkers after over-indulgence in "Jahrbuch fur psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschungen," and other works of Sigmund Freud.

It simplifies, does the *Complex*, it simplifies conversation, and does away entirely with the necessity of thought. Let us say that Caesar's name has come up "Caesar," says the Complex Hound "had the Conquest Complex." Or, suppose it is Keats "Keats," says our Serious Thinker, "had the Beauty Complex." This Complex Complex claims its victims in increasing numbers. It has become a corn on our brain that is to say, we have the Anti-Complex Complex, or *Complex-phobia*.

DON MARQUIS in "The Sun Dial," *The Sun*, New York (1921)

**compliment**. An act of courtesy usually a tribute implying praise or commendation — **Bristol compliment**. A gift of an article that one does not care to retain for oneself — **to return the compliment**. To show kindness or favor in return, pay back in one's own coin.

The Elector of Bavaria ordered his troops to give no quarter to the English, which being known, they *returned the compliment* upon them. LUTTRELL *Brutal Relation* V, 455.

**con amore**. [It.] With love; zealously, delightedly, heartily.

The murderous work, which he performed *con amore*

NAPIER *Life of Viscount Dundee* I, i, 145.

**conceit**. Personal opinion.—**in my or one's own conceit**. In one's own judgment — **out of conceit with**. Having a poor opinion of, in place of a former good opinion, dissatisfied with.

What fine lady hast thou been putting *out of conceit with herself*?

CONGRUE *Old Bachelor* act i, sc 4.

**condition, not a theory**. [U. S.] Actuality, not academic vapping; fact, not rhetoric.

It is a *condition* which confronts us—not a *theory*

GROVER CLEVELAND *Message to Congress* 1887.

**Confederates**. [U. S.] The troops of the Confederate States of America as distinguished from the *Federals*.

The *Confederates* were the first to use the torpedo-boat

*North American Review*, cxxvii, 230 (1878)

—**Confederate States of America**. The league of eleven Southern States of the American Union that seceded in 1860-1861, in the following order. South Carolina (Dec. 20, 1860), Mississippi (Jan. 9, 1861), Florida (Jan. 10), Alabama (Jan. 11); Georgia (Jan. 19), Louisiana (Jan. 26), Texas (Feb. 1), Virginia (April 17), Arkansas (May 6), Tennessee (May 6, confirmed by popular vote June 8), and North Carolina (May 20). This action caused the Civil War, which ended in 1865 in the dissolution of the Confederacy.

**confidence buck, dodge, game, or trick**. [U. S.] One of the various operations or wiles employed by a confidence man for swindling a dupe.

**confidence man**. [U. S.] One who practises the confidence game in any one of its various forms for swindling anyone whose confidence he has won; a bunco-steerer; swindler.

**confidence, to take into one's.** To impart one's secrets to or discuss one's personal affairs with.

**confusion worse confounded.** Complete disorder.

With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,  
*Confusion worse confounded* MILTON *Paradise Lost* Bk II, 996

**conscience, good.** A state of mind in which one is satisfied that one's actions are right—in all conscience. In truth, in reason and honesty, certainly, assuredly by all that is reasonable

It is too soon, in all conscience, to repeat this error again

—**conscience-money.** Money paid to atone some act of dishonesty frequently understood as referring to unpaid income tax

Those tender-minded persons who send *conscience-money* to the Chancellor of the Exchequer

HUGH CONWAY *Family Affair* 1

**conscientious objector.** One opposed to war who declares that his principles will not allow him to fight. See quotation.

A *conscientious objector*, who gave an address at Knutsford, was fined four pounds at Warrington for defrauding the railway company

*The Daily Chronicle* London, April 24, 1918

**constable, to outrun or overrun the.** To live beyond one's means; get into debt.

"How far have you outrun the constable?" I told him that the debt amounted to eleven pounds

SMOLLETT *Roderick Random* XXIII

**constitutional.** A walk for the sake of the health, or to benefit one's constitution.

About a week before examinations were to begin, I was taking my usual constitutional after Hall

F E SMEDLEY *Frank Fairleigh* XXIX.

**constitutional law.** 1. The branch of law which relates to the rules and principles that concern the political structure of society. 2. The positive rules of the organic law and legislative enactments relating thereto.

3. The law that applies to and governs all matters cognizable under or amenable to the constitution as the supreme law of the land.

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary*.

**contact with, to come in.** To establish relations with; meet; form a connection; be in touch or relation with.

Never till now had he come into close contact with crime. TROLLOPE *Orley F* XXIII.

Inner sunshine warms not only the heart of the owner, but all who come in contact with it

J T FIELDS *Underbrush* p 302.

**contempt** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases; as, **bring into contempt.** To cause to be despised—**contempt of court.** Wilful disregard of a court, by disobeying the rules or orders of a court or disturbing its proceedings

"Mr Jinks," said the magistrate, "I shall commit that man for contempt"

DICKENS *Pickwick* XXV

—**fall into contempt.** To disgrace oneself—in contempt. In the position of one who has not purged himself after having committed contempt of court—to have contempt for or to hold in contempt. To look down upon as disgraced or dishonored despise, treat as of little account

**continental, not to care a.** Not to care in the least degree, or concern oneself one iota about: in allusion to the worthlessness of the notes issued by the Continental Congress during the early part of the American Revolution.

He didn't give a continental for anybody Beg your pardon, friend, for coming so near a cuss-word

MARK TWAIN *The Innocents at Home*, p. 20.

**conee! coney!** [Australian.] A cry used by the aborigines as a signal



of approach and adopted by white settlers.—**within cooe.** Within call or hearing.

A common mode of expression is to be "*within cooe*" of a place

**cook** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases, as, a **plain cook**: A domestic of whom only simple cooking is expected —to **cook one's accounts** or **the records**. To falsify accounts to garble or tamper with the records used in both senses to connote deceit

Some falsified printed accounts, artfully *cooked up*, on purpose to mislead or deceive  
SMOLLETT *Peregrine Pickle* XCVIII

—to **cook one's goose**. To frustrate one's schemes or plans

If you worry or excite your brain you will *cook your own goose*—by a quick fire

—to **cook the porridge**. To conceive and carry out a plan of action, plan and undertake a design or line of conduct —to **cook up**. To concoct or invent, as, to *cook up a scandal*  
READE *Hard Cash* XIV

**cool**. Actual, absolute: said of values, to emphasize their degree or importance.

Lord Monmouth had the satisfaction of drawing the Whig minister into a *cool thousand* on the result  
DISRAELI *Coningsby* IV, v, 132

**cool as a cucumber**. Perfectly calm or self-possessed, well poised.

Thucydides is *cool as a cucumber* upon every act of atrocity

**cool the heels**. To wait long and wearily.  
DE QUINCEY *Works, Greek Literature* X, 318

In this parlor Amelia *cooled her heels*, as the phrase is, near a quarter of an hour

**cooling time**. In law, a period of time following a provocation which is sufficient to admit of recovering equanimity and thus to preclude the plea of provocation as a mitigating factor.  
FIELDING *Amelia* VI, ix

**coon**. 1. A raccoon. 2. [U. S. Polit.] A whig: from the fact that raccoon skins were nailed on the emblematic log-cabins in the canvass of 1840, when Democrats spoke of a Whig defeat as **skinning the coon**.

Ohio has gone most unexpectedly for Democracy—has *skinned the coons*, and repudiated Coonism, Federalism, Clavism and every other species of Whiggism

*Spirit of the Times*, Philadelphia, Oct. 19, 1842

3. A vulgar epithet for a Negro because he was supposed to be a keen hunter of the raccoon.—a **coon's age**. A very long time, from the supposed longevity of a coon —a **gone coon**. One who or that which is in a hopeless position or state

Like the sagacious animal in the United State who recognized the Colonel who was such a dead shot, I am a *gone coon*  
DICKENS *Lyng Awake*

—an **old coon**. A wily knowing person —**coon-oyster**, *n*. [Local, U. S.] A small, shapeless, worthless oyster of natural growth —**coon-song**, *n*. A popular negro melody common in the southern United States so-called because originally sung on coon-hunts —to **go the whole coon**. To go to the utmost limit, to go the whole hog —to **hunt the same old coon**. To continue doing the same thing

**Coonery**, *n*. The doctrines or principles of the Coons. Compare **coon**, 2.

**cootie**. [Army Slang.] A body louse (*Pediculus vestimentis*): a word of unknown origin, perhaps related to the Sanskrit *kuti*, body, or Urdu *khuthi*, scalp.

**Copperhead**. [U. S.] 1. A Northern sympathizer with the Confederates: so called by Unionists during the Civil War because they were regarded as attacking the Union treacherously in the rear, as the snake is fabled to strike. 2. One of the early Dutch settlers of New York: a term of ridicule.  
FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dict.*

- Exciting times in Congress. The *Copperheads* are getting furious, and want to recognize the Southern Confederacy. WALT WHITMAN *Diary* April 10, 1864
- copy.** In printing. (1) Manuscript or printed matter to be reproduced in type by a compositor or type-setting machine operator. (2) Advertising matter in manuscript or printed form and its pictorial or display accessories, as initials, type, borders, etc. — **copy-holder**, *n.* 1. A proof-reader's assistant, who aids, as by reading, in comparing copy with proof for the detection of errors. 2. A device for holding copy, as on a typesetting-machine. — **copy-money**, *n.* 1. Wages paid for literary work or the furnishing of copy. 2. Fees paid for copyright. — **to hold copy.** In printing, to read copy for a proof-reader. — **to make copy.** To turn into manuscript for the printer. said in reproach of writers who capitalize their misfortunes or private affairs.
- corker.** [U. S.] 1. Anything of unusually large or excellent quality, a hopper; a settler, a finisher. 2. An argument that puts a stop to discussion. 3. A smart, confident fellow, also a good, clever fellow.
- corking time.** A thoroughly enjoyable time a general intensive.  
"I've had a perfectly *corking time*." THEODORE ROOSEVELT
- corn in Egypt.** Abundance, a plentiful supply of something unexpected: in allusion to *Genesis* xlii. 2  
There is *corn in Egypt* while there is cash in Leadenhall  
LAMB *Letter in Ainger's Life* VII
- corn-cracker.** A nickname sometimes applied by Hoosiers, Buckeyes, Wolverines and Suckers to Kentuckians, but in Kentucky used to designate the mountain folk of Georgia, Carolina as well, and generic for poor whites.  
People in the Atlantic States know as little about the high and beating heart of the Mississippi Valley as we Buckeyes, *Corn-Crackers* and Hoosiers do about Nova Zembla.  
The *Cincinnati Chronicle*, Aug. 26, 1840
- corn-doctor.** A chiropodist.
- corned<sup>1</sup>.** Salted from *corn*, a seed or grain, as of sand or salt. Erroneously traced by *Chambers's Journal* (Feb. 20, 1875) to the cornet or horn blown at meal-time to summon inmates to the meal.
- corned<sup>2</sup>.** Intoxicated; exhilarated; drunk. Erroneously claimed as an Americanism because Bourbon whisky was made from corn.  
When thou was *corn't* an' I was mellow  
We took the road ay like a swallow  
BURNS *Poems*
- corner a market or a stock.** [U. S.] In finance, to so manipulate as to obtain control, and thereby fix the price of a security or commodity.  
Creating a shortage, or what would practically be a *corner in sugar*.  
The *World* New York, Feb. 14, 1888
- corner, to be round the.** To enter the stretch, or near the end of a race; to get round or ahead of one's competitors; to be past the danger line.  
"You're round the corner now," cried Miss Pecksniff.  
DICKENS *Martin Chuzzlewit* II
- corner, to drive into a.** To force into a difficult position; drive into straits, to put in a "fix" or in a "tight place."  
"I don't want to act the constable," said the farmer, *driven into a corner* by this merciless reasoning.  
GEORGE ELIOT *Silas Marner* VII.
- corner, to turn the.** To pass the critical stage, to mend or improve in fortune or health.  
For the present the young man (although he had certainly *turned the corner*) lay in a very precarious condition.  
BLACKMORE *Cripps* xxiii
- corner-stone.** Something regarded as fundamental or of primary importance; as, Magna Carta, the *corner-stone* of English liberty.

**Cornish duck.** A pilchard; also, a fresh or a salted herring. Compare CAPON.

**corn-juice.** [U.S.] Bourbon whisky. BRET HARTE *Prosper's Old Mother*.  
**corns, to tread on one's.** To give offense to one; to annoy, perhaps without intent.

We cannot avoid *treading on each other's corns* as we go on our various ways

MISS TYTLER *Buried Diamonds* IV.

**corn-stalk.** 1. A stalk of maize or Indian corn. 2. [Australia] A girl or youth of colonial birth, so called because usually taller and slighter than the parents.

"*Corn-stalk* is the generic name for the native-born New South Welshman they are thus dubbed from the tendency of the adolescens simplex of Australia to run somewhat more to length than breadth"

INGLIS *Austral Cousins* 149

**coterie.** A gathering of literary or social lions; an assembly of persons forming a set or clique associated for the purpose of pursuing particular aims or interests, as religion, politics, etc.

**coteriean.** One given to attending coteries: a coterist.

Ye *Coterseans!* Who profess No business, but to dance and dress

*Annual Register*, 1772, p 225.

**coterist.** A coteriean.

There's no use looking in the dictionaries for the word "*coterist*," it's brand new; I have just made it myself

FRANK CRANE in *The Globe*, New York, Oct 24, 1918.

**cotton.** To stick closely to one, as cotton sticks; become friendly: followed by *to*, *up*, or *with*.

I don't object to Short, she says, but I *cotton* to Codlin

DICKENS *Old Curiosity Shop* ch 37

"Then you *cottoned up?*" suggested Valentine. "Not a bit of it," said Vigor. "He began to patronize me"

HUGH CONWAY *Living or Dead* XIV.

**cotton king or lord.** One who has grown rich by manufacturing, growing, or dealing in cotton.

**couleur de rose.** [F.] Rose-color: used adverbially, implying an optimistic view or light.

Our warfare is deadly and horrid . . . Nor tinted with *couleur de rose*

HOOD *Poetry, Prose and Worse* XXXIII.

**counsel, to keep one's own.** To be reticent about one's opinions or affairs.

William kept his *counsel* so well that not a hint of his intentions got abroad

MACAULAY *Hist England*.

**count one's chickens before they are hatched.** To base one's expectations, beliefs, hopes, or plans on something that may not happen.

To swallow gudgeons ere they're catch'd

And count their *chickens* ere they're hatched

BUTLER *Hudibras* II iii

**count on or upon.** To rely upon; trust to, look with confidence on.

**count out.** 1. To eliminate from consideration, as in children's games, where a lot is determined by recitation of a ditty, assigning one word to each child in succession. 2. To keep a candidate out of office, when he has been elected, by fraudulent counting of votes. 3. [Eng.] In parliamentary practise, to declare the House of Commons adjourned when it is announced that a quorum of its members is not present. 4. [Sports.] To give a decision against a pugilist unable to continue the contest.

—**to count out the House.** To adjourn a legislative body on observing the lack of a quorum, as the British House of Commons, in which 40 constitutes a quorum.

—**to count the cost.** To consider the risk, etc., beforehand.

**countenance** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases; as, **give or lend countenance to**. To encourage, approve, support

General Grant neither at this time nor at any other *gave* the least *countenance* to the efforts which were made to array him in political opposition to the President

NICOLAY AND HAY *Abraham Lincoln* vol ix, p 51

—**his countenance fell**. He showed disappointment or dejection MURRAY *New Eng Dial* s v *countenance*

When he was told the work must positively be brought to an end *his countenance fell* MORLEY *Diderot* I, 33

—**to keep each other in countenance**. To encourage as by supporting or favoring; keep from being disconcerted

To shut out the censuring world, and *keep each other in countenance*

GOLDSMITH *Vicar of Wakefield* xxii

—**to keep one's countenance**. To preserve a calm demeanor, refrain from betraying one's emotions, as by blushing or smiling

It does not only *keep fools in countenance*, but encourages them to be very troublesome to wise men BOYLE *Occasional Reflec* IV XVIII

—**to put out of countenance**. To confuse, cause to feel ashamed or humiliated You did *put* her a little *out of countenance* MADAME D'ARBLAY *Diary* Sept, 1778

**counter-jumper**. A salesman in a store, a shopkeeper's assistant: from the former practise of jumping over a counter to go to some other place in a store or shop.

"Why," said he, stifling his anger, "it seems free enough to every *counter-jumper* in the town" C KINGLEY *Westward Ho*

**country** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases, as, **black country**. A tract of country in the Midlands of England which is blackened and begrimed by the iron, steel, and coal industries —**old country**. The homeland used by foreigners to indicate the land of their birth or ancestry as opposed to the land of their adoption and settlement, in British colonies, the Motherland —**to go to the country**. To ascertain the will of the electorate, appeal to the country —**to put oneself on the country**. [Eng.] To demand a trial by jury Litigants were said to *put themselves upon the country*, and such trials were carefully distinguished from other judicial proceedings Tho the character of trial by jury has now greatly changed, an accused person in England still submits himself formally to the arbitrament "of God and the country" FUNK & WAGNALL'S *New Standard Dictionary* s v *country*

**coup de théâtre**. [F.] A theatrical hit, hence, any showy or sensational trick or surprize, as by public men to call attention to a particular policy.

The House of Commons is the worst place in the world for *coups de théâtre*

MORLEY *Horace Walpole* XI 225.

**coup d'état**. [F.] An unexpected stroke of policy, generally unconstitutional and often accompanied by violence, as when, on Dec. 2, 1851, Louis Napoleon with unnecessary bloodshed and the aid of the army caused himself to be elected emperor.

I shall be sorry to begin this era of peace by a *coup d'état*, such as that I had in contemplation WELLINGTON *Dispatches* (Gurwood ed.) VIII, 352

**courage of one's convictions, or opinions, to have**. To be brave enough to act in accord with one's belief.

He believed in the efficacy of the birch, and *had the courage of his convictions*

HALL CAINE *Life of Coleridge*, I, 21

**course** indicates gradual advance, progress; but is used idiomatically in of **course**, meaning without special provision or direction, in regular or natural order, inevitably, certainly, by consequence —**in course** or **in due course**. In regular order, in proper time —**keep on the course**. Proceed straightforwardly, do one's duty, go straight

**court**. A hall where justice is administered —**to be ruled out of court**. To be untenable, that can not be maintained; not worth consideration —**to bring into**

**court.** To bring before a judicial tribunal, hence, to produce, as evidence, instance as authority, etc., adduce

**Court of St. James.** The British court from the palace of St. James's, Pall Mall, London, town residence of the sovereigns of England from William III. to William IV., now used only for levees, etc., drawing-rooms being held in Buckingham Palace often used figuratively for Great Britain.

A third described, with gay malevolence, the gorgeous appearance of Mrs Hastings at St James's

MACAULAY *Essays*, Warren Hastings

**court-cupboard.** A buffet for beakers, cans, cups, flagons, and for the display of plate.

Away with the joint-stools, remove the *court-cupboard*, look to the plate

SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* act 1, sc 5

**courtesy title.** [Gt. Brit.] A title borne not of legal right, but by courtesy.

Thus, the eldest son of a duke, marquis, or earl bears by courtesy one of his father's inferior titles, a younger son of a duke or marquis is called *Lord*. In Scotland the heir to the title of baron or viscount is called *Master*, as, the *Master of Stair*

**court-plaster.** A fine quality of sticking-plaster formerly cut into fantastic designs and used for facial decoration by women at court.

**Cousin Betty.** [Brit.] A half wit; any imbecile. Sometimes, **Cousin Betsy.**

I do not think there's a man living that can say Foster's wronged him of a penny, or gave short measure to a child or a *Cousin Betsy*

MRS GASKELL *Sylvia's Lover* xiv

**Cousin Michel or Michael.** A sobriquet for the German personified

*Michel* in Old German means "gross" *Cousin Michel* is meant to indicate a slow, heavy, simple, unrefined, coarse-feeding people

BREWSTER *Phrase and Fable* p 300

**cousin, to call.** To claim blood relationship.

My new cottage is to have nothing Gothic about it, nor pretend to call *cousins* with the mansion-house

WALPOLE *Letters* 1, 262 (1752).

**Coventry.** A city in the Midlands of England where women who spoke to soldiers were ostracized because of the unpopularity of the troops. Hence, to send to **Coventry.** To banish from society or social intercourse. This phrase may have originated from the fact that incompetent officers were sent to the town by the Parliamentary Army during the Civil War as Coventry was a stronghold of the Parliamentary Party, from the number of Royalists in Coventry jail during the Commonwealth, from the restriction of trading privileges in Coventry, or, from a corruption of *quarantine*, formerly pronounced *coventry*

The skilful artizan who in a given period can do more than his fellows, but who dare not do it, because he would be sent to *Coventry* by them

SPENCER *Study of Sociology* 248

**cover.** The table furniture, as plate, knife, fork, spoon, and napkin, etc., for one person—**covers were laid for.** Dinner was provided for

We get a card of invitation to a dinner of sixty *covers* at John Hamocks

LOWELL *Study Wind* 99.

His *cover*, as we said, was laid for him in expectation of that tyrant's return

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* p 112

**cow.** [Brit.] 1. The female of the ox. 2. A timid person; a poltroon: possibly from *cow*, to overcome with terror.

Did'st thou not say even now,

That Carisophus, my master, was no man, but a *cowe*,

In taking so many blowes, and give never a blow agayn

Damon and Pithias, i 215.

3. A thousand pounds.

All over Lancashire a horse is called a *cow* which is a cant term for a thousand pounds

The Athenæum London, Sept 10, 1870.

—**curst cows have curst horns.** Angry men can not do all the harm they may

wish to do—like a cow's tail. Always behind; unpunctual; tardy —the whiter the cow the surer it is to go to the altar. The richer the spoil the greater the chance of its confiscation perhaps in allusion to the sacrifice of white cattle by the Druids

The system of impropriations grew so rapidly that, in the course of three centuries, more than a third part of all the benefices in England became such, and those the richest, for the whiter the cow, the surer was it to go to the altar

BLUNT *Reformation in England* p 63  
—until or when the cows come home. An indefinite time

"There," exclaimed Rogers, "that'll hold us till all's blue, and the cows come home in the morning"

WILCOX *Sea Fishermen*, 121

**cowboy, cowpuncher.** [U. S.] A man of any age employed on a cattle-ranch; during the American revolution, a slacker, or worse.

A certain gang of people in our Revolution, who were then called *cow-boys*, who fought neither for Whigs nor Tories, but sold beef to both

*Congressional Globe* p 363 (1842).

The latest troubles between *cowboys* and Indians will cause an outbreak

*The Mules City* (Mont.) *Press*, June, 1884

**cowlick.** [Brit.] A wisp of hair growing in the wrong direction, and sometimes of different color; also, a lock of hair brought forward from the ear.

**crack, a.** Of superior excellence; best; first-class; as, a *crack* shot; the *crack* regiment.

My sleeping room . . . was the *crack* apartment of the hotel

T. Hook *Jack Brag* XIV

**crack, n.** 1. A moment; an instant; as, I'll be with you in a *crack*. 2. A fissure or opening as in a board or boarded floor—to walk a *crack*.

To walk along a line made by joining boards, walk a chalk-line, be sober

**crack a bottle.** Open in order to drink; as, to *crack* a bottle of champagne.

"What," says the wife, "you have been tippling with the gentleman! I see"  
"Yes," answered the husband, "we have *cracked* a bottle together"

FIELDING *Tom Jones* VIII, vii

**crack a crust.** Get along satisfactorily; make both ends meet.—to *crack* a tidy crust. To attain a greater measure of success.

**cracked.** [Brit.] 1. Crazy; mentally deficient.—**cracked pipkins are discovered by their sound** Speech reveals ignorance

Silence with some is wisdom most profound,

*Cracked pipkins are discovered by their sound*

PETER PINDAR *Lord B and his Notions*

—**cracked up.** Broken, smashed, ruined, erroneously claimed to be an Americanism

Of these there only remain now 122 companies, with a capital of £180,000,000, the rest having one and all *cracked up*, as the Americans would say *Britannia* June, 1870.

**cracker.** The poor white inhabitants of Georgia and Florida.

The term originated from the *cracker*, or dry, soft piece of buckskin attached to the end of the lash of the type of whip used by them, which made reports sounding like pistol-shots when the whip was cracked

**Cracker State.** [U. S.] Georgia.

**crack of doom.** The signal for the Last Judgment.

Will the line stretch out to the *crack of doom*? SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* act iv, sc 1.

**crack up.** To praise highly; cry up.

Those who *crack* themselves up are generally cracked

SURGEON *John Ploughman's Pictures* p 555.

**cram.** 1. To study under pressure; to prepare for an examination.

He *crammed* for it, to use technical but expressive term, he read up for the subject

DICKENS *Pickwick* xl, 446.

2. To tell untruths or fanciful stories to; stuff with nonsense.

**crammer.** [Brit.] A tutor, coach or grinder; one who prepares students for examination.

Put him into the hands of a good grinder or *crammer*, and they would soon cram the necessary portion of Latin and Greek into him. Miss EDGEWORTH *Patronize* I, iii, 49

**crank.** [U. S.] A person with a mental twist or disordered mind; an eccentric or crotchety person; a monomaniac.

The college settlements, the college investigators, the college *cranks* of every kind, who stir our disillusioned organs of public opinion to such high merriment.

*The Evening Post*, New York, March 14, 1910.

**craps.** [U. S.] A game of chance in which the object is to form certain winning combinations of numbers by rolling two dice. Called also *crap-shooting*. See AFRICAN GOLF.

**crap-shooter.** A player at hazard or African golf.—**crap-shooting.** The act of throwing or rolling the dice in hazard. Called also *shooting the bones* or *rattling the bones*.

**crash dive.** A prompt and sudden submergence of a submarine vessel.

**craw.** The crop.—to stick in the *craw*, *crop*, or *gizzard*. To be a cause of annoyance or discomfort; irritate.

**crawfish.** [U. S.] To back out of a difficulty; recede; retreat: from the practise of a crawfish in moving backwards or sidewise.

They may try to make me back water, but I never did *crawfish*.

W. N. HARBEN *Abner Daniel* 103.

**creaking doors hang the longest.** Sickly persons frequently outlive the strong.

**creation, beat or lick all.** To excel or surpass all.

**creature.** Any intoxicating liquor; but, in Ireland especially, whisky in the phrase *a drop of the creature*.

My Master took too much of the *creature* last night. DRYDEN *Amphitryon* III. 1.

He chanced to have taken an overdose of the *creature*. SCOTT *Guy Mannering* xlv.

**creature comforts.** Things that comfort or refresh the body; especially food and drink.

**creeps.** A nervous sensation as of insects creeping on the flesh; goose-flesh, cold shivers.

"The Quick or the Dead," by which many lady-like persons have been given the *creeps*.

*The Globe*, London, May 22, 1890

**creole.** 1. A native of Spanish America or the West Indies, of European (originally French or Spanish) parentage: distinguished from a negro, aboriginal, or person of mixed blood. 2. [U. S.] A white descendant of French or Spanish settlers of Louisiana and the Gulf States characterized by distinct speech and social traits. 3. In Louisiana: (1) A white native who speaks French.

His whole appearance was a dazzling contradiction of the notion that a *Creole* is a person of mixed blood.

CABLE *The Grandissimes* p. 47

(2) A native-born negro, as distinguished from one brought from Africa. (3) [Alas] An offspring of a Russian father and an Eskimo or Indian mother.—**creole dialects.** Corrupt English as spoken by creoles in the southern United States and in the West Indies, also, in a broader sense, those corruptions of French, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, English, etc., which have arisen from mixing these languages with aboriginal dialects.—c. negro. One born in a part of the West Indies or of the United States that was originally Spanish or French—c. *patois*. The French spoken by the negroes and creole negroes of Louisiana.

**Creole State.** [U. S.] Louisiana, from the numbers of white inhabitants descended from the French and Spanish settlers.

**crevasse.** 1. A fissure or chasm in glacial ice. 2. A break in the levee of the lower Mississippi.

**crocodile tears.** Simulated or pretended weeping; hypocritical grief: from the tale of ancient travelers that the crocodile weeps over those he devours.

He (Lord Lovat) laid all the blame of the Frasers' rising upon his son, saying, with crocodile tears, that he was not the first who had an undutiful son.

G A SALA *Capt Dangerous*, xiii.

**crooked as a snake-fence, as Pearl Street, as a ram's horn.** [U. S. Colloq.] Phrases applied to persons or things which deviate from the straight and narrow. Rail, snake, or Virginia fences are zig-zag in construction, Pearl Street, New York City, which begins and ends on Broadway, is crookedest of the "cow-path" streets, and a ram's horn (colloq in Great Britain also) has convolutions as well as curves.

**crooked sixpence.** [Brit.] A coin supposed to bring its owner luck, hence carried as a pocket-piece.

**crooked stick.** A stubborn person.

**crook the elbow.** [Brit.] To drink, guzzle.

The secretary might have done great things in literature but for his unfortunate crook of the elbow.

BESANT AND RICE *With Harp and Crown* XIX.

**crook the mouth.** Make a wry face as in displeasure

**cropper, to come a.** To fall headlong, as from a horse; hence, to fail disastrously in an undertaking

**crop out.** To appear above the surface; arise from; become partly visible: a coal-vein *crops out* on the hillside; his peculiarities *crop out*.

The charge against the prisoner *crops out* in the sequel

MAITLAND *Essays* 288.

**crop up.** To come up or turn up unexpectedly

The subject having once *cropped up* in an Exeter College common room

BURTON *Lives of Twelve Good Men* I n 143

**cross** in its various meanings is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, **to cross a check.** [Gt Brit.] To write something, as the name of a bank, across the face of a check, requiring its deposit in a bank by the payee for collection — **to cross one's hand.** To give money to, especially by crossing the hand with a silver coin done to fortune-tellers

An honest dairy-maid who *Crosses their Hands* with a piece of silver every summer

ADDISON *Spectator* No 130

— **to cross one's mind.** To occur to one — **to cross one's path.** To obstruct or interfere with one — **to cross swords.** To fight with swords, to engage in a controversy with — **to cross the cudgels.** To submit — **to live or be on the cross.** To live dishonestly or be dishonest, to be crooked

Roke had seen a good deal of men and manners, and, in his own opinion, at least, was "up to every dodge on the cross" that this iniquitous world could unfold

OWEN *Under Two Flags* V

— **to take the Cross.** Turn crusader

**crow.** To exult in triumph; brag; boast, vapor usually with *about* or *over*.

The idea of allowing any boy to *crow over* me, was preposterous

L. M. ALCOCK *Hospital Sketches* p 8.

**crow flies, as the.** In a straight line.

We cut over the fields straight as the *crow flies*

DICKENS *Oliver Twist* XXV

**crow's-foot.** Wrinkle diverging from the outer corner of the eye; due to age or sorrow.

**crow's-nest.** A look-out, as on the foremast of a ship.

**crow, to eat.** [U. S.] To retract, withdraw a statement, apologize.

Politicians are sometimes compelled to *eat* considerable *crow* after an unsuccessful campaign.

MAITLAND *Am Slang Dict.*



**crow to pick or pluck, to have a.** To have a difference or quarrel to settle.

If there be a "*crow to pluck*" between us and any contemporary we shall make a clean breast of it. *Tast's Magazine* XVI 385.

**crown.** To strike on the head; bash.

**crucial test.** Severe but decisive test.

**crusher, a.** Anything unusually large or fine; a corker.

She is a *crusher*, ain't she now?

THACKERAY *Pendennis* iv.

**cry** is used in its various senses in the following phrases:

—**great cry and little wool.** Much ado about nothing, great promise but small performance —**cry-cupboard.** To crave for food, feel hungry

My inside *cries cupboard*

KINGSLEY *Westward Ho* 25

—**cry down.** See **CRY UP** —**cry off.** 1. To retreat from a bargain 2. To announce one's withdrawal from a negotiation, treaty, or engagement — **cry over spilt milk.** To waste time grieving over what can not be helped or something which is unrecoverable.

What's done, Sam, can't be helped, there is no use in *crying over spilt milk*

HALIBURTON *Clockmaker*

—**cry quits.** Declare to be even, or that neither has the advantage —**cry stinking fish.** Wash one's soiled linen in public, as for sympathy or profit

Does every man *cry stinking fish* to be sold

JEREMY TAYLOR.

—**to cry up.** To extol, puff, praise highly, antithesis of **cry down.**

They who *cry up* the French Revolution, *cry down* the party which you and I belong to

BURKE *Corres* III 390.

—**to cry wolf.** To give a false alarm in allusion to the boy in *Aesop's* fable who summoned the neighbors against wolves when there were none, and hence was not believed when the wolves really came.

**cub.** A bold, ill-mannered boy or girl.

**Cubist.** In art, one whose compositions are characterized by squared effects.

The *Cubist* also produces the quadrilateral, the trapeze, and plays pleasantly with the triangle

*The Literary Digest*, Nov. 18, 1911, pp 914, 915.

—**Cubism.** The style of art produced by the Cubist.

It has been formulated by persons of distinct intellectual ability. It is easier to feel its ability than to show it

F J MATHER JR in *The Nation*, Feb 3, 1916

The lunatic fringe was fully in evidence, especially in the rooms devoted to the *Cubists* and *Futurists*, or near-impressionists

THEODORE ROOSEVELT *History as Literature* 305

**cuckoo.** 1. An interloper. 2. A fool; simpleton; an idiot. Used in contempt.

(1) We Americans are all *cuckoos*,—we make our homes in the nests of other birds.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES *Poet at the Breakfast Table*, 1, 12.

(1) The cuckoo, then, on every tree

Mocks married men, for thus sings he Cuckoo!

Cuckoo! Cuckoo! O word of fear,

Unpleasing to the married year!

SHAKESPEARE *Love's Labor's Lost* act v, sc 2.

(2) The cuckoo I travel with . he also has his uses

SCOTT *Peval of the Peak* xxxiii.

**cudgel one's brains.** To think hard; puzzle.

When a gentleman is *cudgelling his brains* to find any rhyme for sorrow besides borrow and tomorrow

THACKERAY *Pendennis* xv

**cudgels, to take up the.** To enter into a contest or controversy, maintain or support, as in an argument.

His wife had *taken up the cudgels* for her friend

TROLLOPE *He Knew* I 5

**cue, to give the.** To repeat the closing words of an actor's speech as the signal for another actor to speak or enter; hence, any signal for action; a catchword; hint; suggestion.

An actor's *cue* seems to be the same word also, as signifying the last words or the tail-end of the speech of the preceding speaker SKEAT *Etym. Dict.*  
"The Whig papers are very subdued," continued Mr Rigby "Ah! they have not  
the *cue* yet," said Lord Eskdale DISRAELI *Coningsby* 1, 5.  
**cul bono.** [L.] Popularly, for what use? to what end? literally, for whose benefit? a utilitarian maxim.

Are there any who utter the *cul bono* criticism?

**cul-de-sac.** A blind alley; a passage with an entrance but no outlet. SPENCER *Sociological Studies* III 69.

**cum grano salis.** [L.] Literally, with a grain of salt; figuratively, with some allowance; qualifiedly.

**cup.** Suffering that one must bear; one's portion of sorrow or bitterness in life.

Welcome the sour *cup* of prosperity! Affliction may one day smile again

—to drain the *cup* to the dregs. To experience any emotion, as sorrow or disappointment, or indulge any pursuit, as dissipation, to the utmost extent SHAKESPEARE *Love's Labor's Lost* act i, sc. 1.

**cup, drink the.** Bear the burden or grief in allusion to *Matthew* xxvi 39.

**cup runs over, my or his.** My or his portion is abundant to overflowing.

Thou anointest my head with oil, my *cup* runneth over Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life Psalms xxiii 5

**cups, in his.** Intoxicated; also, in the act of drinking or engaged in convivialities

I always know when he has been *in his cups* by the state of his saucers

**cupboard love.** Selfish love, such as that inspired by an appeal through the stomach. MARK LEMON *Jest Book* 185

This last and long enduring passion for Mrs. Thrale (Dr Johnson's) was, however, composed of *cupboard love*, Platonic love, and vanity tickled and gratified

**cur.** A contemptible man, a despicable fellow, an outcast: derived from a dog of degenerate breed. MISS SEWARD *Letters* II, 103

What would you have, you *curs*,

That like nor peace, nor war? SHAKESPEARE *Coriolanus* act i, sc 1

**curb, on the.** [U. S.] Out in the street: said of the dealings of **curbstone brokers**, small dealers in securities

All sorts of brokers, from the leading houses down to the *curbstone* "operator" known as the "hyena" or "Bohemian" of the street Knickerbocker Mag LVII 635

—**curb-market** [U. S.] New York's market for securities not listed by the Stock Exchange, held in the open air for many years on Broad Street below Wall Street, until a building was erected in 1921 by which the "curb-brokers" and their customers could be sheltered from the weather

**cure.** [Brit.] A person of marked peculiarities; an odd or eccentric person; a character, fool; funny fellow; as, he's a perfect *cure*: abbreviated from "curious" or "curiosity," and first used in London about 1856, but popularized by a music hall song of 1862 which had as chorus, "The cure, the cure, the perfect cure!" in allusion to the cold water cure.

**curl down.** To lie down in a coiled or crouching position.

**curled darling.** A pampered and petted youth adorned with ringlets.

The wealthy *curled darlings* of our nation

SHAKESPEARE *Othello* act i, sc. 2.

**curl, make one's hair or liver.** Make one feel intensely.

This is a sport that *makes the body's very liver curl* with enjoyment

MARK TWAIN *Life on the Mississippi*,

**curl, out of.** Out of condition; out of sorts,

**curl the lip.** Make a sneering grimace.

**curl up.** To shut up, to become silent.

**curry favor.** To seek favor by adulation and excessive attentions: thought to be a corruption of **to curry favel**, to use insincere flattery, or to toady to another for personal advantage.

Nobody expects him [the farmer] to *curry favor*, in order to sell his produce

GREELEY *What I Know of Farming* 186.

**curse**, used as a symbol of worthlessness, is a corruption of Middle English *kerse* (cress, as something of little worth). See quotations

To hasten is *not worth a kerse*

GOWER *Confessio Amantis* 1, 334.

Wyndom and witte nowe is *not worth a karse*

WILLIAM LANGLAND *Pier's Plowman* xii, 15

**curse by bell, book, and candle.** See under **BELL, BOOK, AND CANDLE.**

**curse of Cain.** The punishment pronounced upon the first murderer.

When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength, a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth

Genesis iv 12

He told how murderers walk'd the earth beneath the *curse of Cain*

HOOD *Eugene Aram* XII

**curse of Canaan.** Negro slavery: from the curse that Noah pronounced on Canaan, the son of Ham, whose descendants were once believed to be negroes.

**curse of Scotland.** The nine of diamonds: perhaps from its likeness to the Star coat of arms, as the first earl was hated for his connection with the Glencoe massacre (1692), but the origin of the term is uncertain.

**curtain** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases implying exposure or concealment, beginning or ending—**behind the curtain**, in secret, privately—**curtain-lecture**. Faultfinding, as administered by a nagging wife to her husband. Originally behind the curtains of a bed. Douglas Jerrold gave the phrase a new vogue by his *Mrs. Caville's Curtain Lectures*, published in *Punch*.

He was then lying under the discipline of a *curtain lecture* ADDISON *Tatler* 243.

—**draw the curtain on.** Abstain from going into details about, refrain from discussing or giving publicity to, conceal—**drop the curtain**. Bring to an end—**raise the curtain**. Reveal—**ring down the curtain**. Bring the matter to an end.

—**the curtain falls.** The scene is over, the play is at an end

No; death lets *fall the curtain* and divides our loves forever

YOUNG *Brothers* act v sc 1.

**cushie, cushy.** 1. [Army.] Soft; easy; comfortable possibly from the French "coucher," to lie down; go to bed.

I was, as I thought, in for a *cushy* job at the base

EMERY *Over the Top* p 288

2. [Local Eng.] (1) Delicate, sickly. (2) Sweet, hence, a sweetieheart. (3) Left-handed; awkward.

**cuss.** [U. S.] A perverse or obstinate fellow: used frequently with a qualifying word, as a **mean cuss**: A close-fisted narrow-minded person

**cussedness, general, or pure.** [U. S.] 1. Wickedness, malignity, mischief. 2. Determination, courage or resolution.

Through the hot, black breath of the burnin' boat,

Jim Bludso's voice was heard,

And they all had trust in his *cussedness*,

And knowed he would keep his word

JOHN HAY *Jim Bludso*.

**custard-pie comedies.** A type of motion picture in which custard or other pies are used as missiles

**cut.** To avoid meeting a person; deliberately fail to recognize; affect not to know; ignore. Used also as **cut dead** for emphasis.

He *cut you dead*, you say? Did it occur to you that he could not see you clearly enough to know you? HOLMES *Over the Teacups* ch 11, p 37.

A **direct cut** is a deliberate stare without recognition. Called also **cut direct**. The **cut indirect** feigns not to see or looks in another direction, the **cut infernal** stoops, as if to pick up something or tie a shoelace, until the person has passed, the **cut sublime** gazes upwards, as if admiring the clouds or some lofty structure as the acquaintance passes by.

**cut a caper**. To take fantastic steps, as in dancing, leap, frisk; hence, to act in a fantastic or foolish manner.

—**cut a caper upon nothing**. To be hanged

Two of the honestest Gentlemen in Catchpole land had been made to *cut a caper on* RABELAIS, Motteux's trans, IV xvi

—**cut a dash, a figure**. To present a striking appearance. make a big display

But the squire does not intend to *cut a dash* until the Spring.

FOOTE *Maid of Bath* I.

—**cut a feather**. To split hairs, draw fine distinctions

Men who have not the skill to *cut a feather* T GODDARD *Plato's Demon* 317

—**cut a melon**. To declare a large dividend or its equivalent —**cut and come again**. Help yourself and take more when you need it —**cut and run**. Get out quickly and run away —**cut and thrust**. Sharp; effective.

The short *cut and thrust* method of Socrates.

JOWETT *Plato* II 421.

—**cut away**. Run off hurriedly —**cut capers**. Perform antics play the fool —**cut your capers**. Be off! get out! —**cut ice**. Make an impression as one who cuts a figure on the ice in skating —**cut in**. To break in join in suddenly, to intrude

He was afraid you would *cut in*, and carry off the girl. SCOTT *Brave of Lam* XXI  
—**cut it out**. [U S] An adjuration to stop doing something, or to shut up, and intended to be emphatic rather than courteous —**cut it short**. Be brief —**cut off his head**. [U S] Deprive an official of his job, discharge an employee

At the commencement of any fresh Presidency, hundreds of Democratic employees have their heads *cut off* to make room for Republicans, who, in their turn, will be decapitated when the Democrats get the upper hand again

*The Daily Telegraph*, London, Jan 5, 1872

—**cut off with a shilling**. Disinherited by bequeathing a shilling, thus showing the testator had not overlooked the person so disinherited —**cut of one's jib**. One's general appearance or carriage —**cut one's lucky**. Escape narrowly —**cut up rough, rusty, savage**. Become angry or quarrelsome.

Praps I may say I won't pay, and *cut up rough*

DICKENS *Pickwick* XLIII.

I didn't mean any offense—beg pardon—hang it! You *cut up quite savage*

THACKERAY *Pendennis* 1

—**cut your timber**. [Brit] Be off! cut your stick —**to be cut up**. To be distressed or grieved, hurt, formerly to be in embarrassed circumstances —**to cut down**. 1. To curtail, retrench, reduce, as one's expenses 2. To be laid low as by illness; also, to die as a result of illness, as, in his prime he was *cut down* by influenza —**to cut it too fat**. To overdo it —**to cut loose**. To sever connection, assume an independent attitude —**to cut lots**. To draw lots —**to cut on**. To move on rapidly —**to cut one's coat according to one's cloth**. To act in conformity with limiting circumstances, live within one's means

Conform thyself then to thy present fortune, and *cut thy coat according to thy cloth*

BURTON, *Anat Melancholy* p 365

—**to cut one's own throat**. To take an attitude detrimental to one's best interests; ruin oneself —**to cut one's wisdom-teeth**. To come to an age or condition of discretion —**to cut out**. 1. To separate or remove by cutting, or as if by cutting. 2. To oust and supplant, as a rival 3. To leave hastily 4. [W U S & Austral] To select cattle from a round-up and drive them out by pony 5. [Austral] To finish shearing —**to cut short**. 1. To interrupt; bring to an end abruptly 2. To give less than is due or expected —**to cut (one's) stick**. Leave hastily or clandestinely, run away —**to cut the Gordian knot**. See GORDIAN —**to cut the ground from under**. To destroy the base of an argument or make a position untenable —**to cut to pieces**. To sever or separate into fragments, break up, utterly demoralize hence, to scatter and slaughter, as an army —**to cut under**. To undersell, as a competitor, cut rates —**to cut up**. 1. To cut in pieces. 2. To

criticize or score severely, as, to *cut up* a book or an author 3. To dig up, eradicate, as weeds 4. To affect deeply, afflict, wound, as, he was dreadfully *cut up*  
 She looks so *cut up* and altered that I'm sure she can't last long  
 THACKERAY *Vanity Fair*. I xxv  
 5. To play pranks—to have *cut one's eye-teeth*. To have learned the ways of the world

## D

**dab, a great or regular.** An expert; one who is very skilful; an adept, of which word it may be a corruption.

(To fetch a phrase from school) *great dabs* at this kind of facetiousness

FIELDING *Ess Conversation* Wks 642.

I wish to show I am a *dab* in history

THACKERAY *Punch in the East* iv.

**dabster.** A dab, an expert; also, one who dabbles or bungles.

**daggers drawn, at.** In a state of open enmity, hostile to each other, and ready for combat

Three ladies . . . talked of for his second wife, and all at *daggers drawn* with each other

MARIA EDGEWORTH *Castle Rackrent*.

**daggers, to look or speak.** To show animosity to by look or speech; to glare at or speak angrily to

Lord Privilege *looked daggers at me*

MARRYAT *Peter Simple* III.

I will *speak daggers* to her, but will use none

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act II sc. 3.

**Dail Eireann** (pronounced *doul air'an*). From the Gael Irish *dail* assembly, meeting, and *Eireann* (genitive of *Eire*, Ireland), of Ireland. See quotation.

The *Dail Eireann* or Irish Constituent Assembly, met in the Mansion House at Dublin

*The Daily Mail* London, Jan 22, 1919.

**daisies, to turn up one's toes to the.** To die and be buried.

Be kind to these dear little folks

When our *toes are turned up to the daisies*

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends*.

**daisy.** [U. S.] A person or thing that is charming, pretty or exceptionally fine; a dandy.

**damn, a continental or a twopenny.** Something of little worth or of no value in colloquial speech a vague imprecation of which the source has been erroneously associated with the Hindi *damn*, an old copper coin of little value

**damn with faint praise.** To show disapproval of or undervalue by praising slightly; condemn.

*Damn with faint praise*, assent with civil leer,

And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer

POPE *Prologue to the Satires*

**Damocles, sword of.** A danger threatening amid fancied security.

A courtier was placed, by order of the Syracusan tyrant Dionysius, at a banquet with a sword suspended over his head by a single hair, that he might learn the insecurity of happiness.

Little do directors and their companies know of this *sword of Damocles* that hangs over them

*Law Times* XCII 213.

**damp.** One who or that which depresses, discourages, or dejects. —to put or throw a *damp* on. To reduce one's enthusiasm; discourage.

**Dan to Beersheba, from.** From one end to the other; all over; everywhere. American parallels are from Maine to California, from the Golden Gate to the Gulf of Mexico.

**dance after, dance attendance.** Follow or wait upon another continually: often implying forced, servile, or tedious attentions or waiting.

After *dancing attendance* upon the court for a month or two they received their  
dismissal GILMOUR *Mongols* XXXI.

**dance the hay.** Move about briskly.

Mary is busied about many things, is *dancing the hays* between three houses

WALPOLE *Letters* II, 122

**dance, to lead one a.** To cause to follow hither and thither, hence, to cause one delay in the pursuit of some object

It was notorious that the late Maria Jane had *led* Mr. Wiggins something of a *dance*  
in this life ALDRICH *Prudence Paisley* 1 12

**dance upon nothing.** To be hanged; dance the Tyburn jig—Tyburn being the place where malefactors were hanged.

If a dance upon Sunday led so inevitably to a *dance upon nothing*

An Open Question Note

**dandiprat, dandypratt.** [Brit.] An insignificant or contemptible person; a jackanapes. Originally, a half-farthing piece; later, a dwarf or a page.

**dandy.** 1. An exquisite, a fop. 2. [U. S.] A fine fellow or a choice article; a person or thing that is strictly first-class.

**Darby and Joan.** An old married couple exemplifying conjugal felicity by their devotion: derived from the subjects of a ballad written by Henry Woodfall who was apprenticed to John Darby (d. 1730)

They furnished a high life illustration of *Darby and Joan*

MRS. MATHEWS *Tea-table Talk* I 50

**dark and bloody ground.** [U. S.] Kentucky: an erroneous but popular rendering. The word "kentucke" in the Cherokee means "prairie," from *kenta*, field or meadow.

That beautiful region which was soon to verify its Indian appellation of the *dark and bloody ground*

LAIROBI *Rambles in North America* I 90

**Dark Continent.** Africa, because the black races predominate there.

**dark horse.** A horse whose ability to win is at long odds, hence, an unknown or unforeseen competitor, especially in politics

A *Dark Horse* is a person not very widely known in the country at large, but known rather for good than for evil

Speaking generally, the note of the *Dark Horse* is respectability verging on colorlessness, a good sort of person to fall back upon when able but dangerous favorites have proved impossible

BRUCE *Am. Commonwealth* II, III, 153

**dark, keep.** Be silent; give no information

Of course I'll *keep as dark* about it as possible

Century *Mag* XXX 380

—to *keep one in the dark.* To reveal nothing to, keep in ignorance

**darken one's door.** To visit a person: commonly used with a negative, with the implication of unwelcomeness; as, I will never *darken his door* again.

**darky.** [U. S.] A negro, a person of color, especially the old-fashioned Southern type.

**dash, cut a.** Make a display.

**dash it all! or dash my buttons, timbers, wig, etc.** Euphemistic oaths.

"*Dash it all!*" said the police-surgeon, "that's two fatal cases I've had to-day"

G. R. SIMS *Three Balls*.

**daughter of Eve.** A woman. See ADAM.

**daughter of the horseleech.** A woman who lives at the expense of another, an idle worthless parasite

The *horseleech* hath two daughters, crying, Give, give  
never satisfied, yea four things say not, It is enough

There are three things that are  
Proverbs xxx, 15.

**Davy Jones.** The spirit of the sea: a sailor's term.—**Davy Jones's locker**, the bed of the ocean as the last resting-place of persons drowned at sea.

This same *Davy Jones*, according to the mythology of sailors, is the friend that presides over all the evil spirits of the deep SMOLLETT *Peregrine Pickle* XIII

**day** is used in various idiomatic phrases; as, **a day after**, or **before the fair**: [Brit.] A day too late or too early for an event, having missed the purpose of a visit or journey—**day by day**. Every day without intermission, each day in succession; daily—**day-dream**. A visionary fancy or castle in the air, something impossible of realization—**day in day out**. All day long, from morning till night—**one day**. On a particular day in the past, used chiefly indefinitely for a time; one does not recall or does not wish to recall—**the day**. 1. The present time or the time or period specified. 2. A toast given in the German Navy before the World War (*Der Tag!*) to the time when the British and the German fleets would meet in battle—**this or that day week, six months or year**. The day of next week which corresponds with to-day, or six months or a year later—**to have had or seen one's day**. To have passed one's prime, be no longer in the swim

**daylight, in broad or open**. Openly, publicly, in the full light of observation and knowledge.

**daylight into, let**. Make a hole in, stab or shoot a person, also, expose; bring to public knowledge or view.

**daylight saving**. The adjustment of clocks, as by setting them ahead in summer, so as to take advantage of the daylight in the performance of labor, and to save fuel and artificial light.

No law placed upon the statutes of our country has afforded the greatest good to the greatest number as the *daylight saving measure*

Congressman DAVID J. O'CONNELL *Speech* in House of Representatives, June, 1919

**days are numbered, one's**. One's end is near; one's career is drawing to a close.

**days of grace**. The days (usually three) allowed for payment of a note or bill of exchange after the date on which it falls due.

**dead** is used in various senses in the following idiomatic phrases:—**dead as a door-nail or as a herring**. Absolutely dead, stone-dead—**dead-beat**. [U S.] 1. A cheat, sponger, sharper, dead-head. 2. Thoroughly exhausted, worn out—**dead broke**. [U S. Slang.] Utterly penniless, cleaned out, stone broke, ruined—**dead duck**. [U S.] One who or that which is of little or no worth, especially (*Stock Exchange Cant*) one who has failed beyond hope of recovery or something which has depreciated in value—**dead frost**. A fiasco, a failure, a theatrical phrase used of a play that is only fit to be discarded—**dead drunk**. Stupefied by drink

Cupid is not only blind at present, but *dead-drunk* STEELE *Tailor* No 5 ¶ 1  
—**dead game**. [U. S.] Tenacious, plucky, determined, as, a *dead-game* sport, a spirited all-round sportsman—**dead gone**. [U S.] Very fond of, completely enamored of, generally with *on*—**dead-hand**. Mortmain, from the Latin *in Manu Mortuo*: said of real property held by a religious corporation. In popular usage, reference to belief in the malignant influence of a dead person whom one has injured in life.

The benevolence of the "*dead hand*" which corrupts and blights all its victims  
A J WILSON in *Marmillan's Mag* 469 (1880)

—**deadhead**. [U S.] One who receives gratis any service or accommodation for which the general public is expected to pay, as, *deadheads* on a train or in a theater, by extension, one who gets something for nothing, a dead-beat, a loafer, a sponger

—**dead heat**. A race in which two or more competitors finish together, and there is no winner—**dead horse**. Work for which wages have been paid before being earned

*Dead horses* are debts due to the pursuer on account of advances in pay

E C WINES *Two Years and a Half* I 73

—**dead letter**. 1. A letter which has been sent to the dead-letter office. 2. A law that is not enforced—**dead-letter office**. The department in the general Post-office

where unclaimed letters are examined and returned to their writers or destroyed. In Great Britain the name of this department has been changed to Returned Letter Section of the Post Office (*Post Office Guide* Jan., 1922, p. 7) — **dead man's part**. That part of the personal estate of a person deceased which, by the custom of London, became the administrator's, that part of an intestate decedent's personal estate which does not go by law to the wife or children — **dead men**. 1. *Naut.* Reef-ends or gasket-ends not properly tucked in when a sail is furled. 2. Empty bottles, as after a carouse, bottles bearing Moll Thompson's Mark, 1 c = M T = empty — **dead one**. [U S] Any one who has survived his usefulness, a has-been, a dud, also, one who has committed political suicide — **dead-sea apple or fruit**. An apple of Sodom (q v), fruit fair to look upon, but crumbling into dust when the skin is broken — **dead set**. Determined or persistently anxious, as, he is *dead set* on going to Paris — **dead to rights**. [U S] To make sure, remove all doubt — **to flog the dead horse**. 1. To waste time and effort, to dissipate energy uselessly. For full twenty minutes by the clock the Premier might be said to have rehearsed that particularly lively operation known as *flogging a dead horse*.

*The Globe*, London, Aug. 1, 1872  
2. To work for pay that has been advanced and spent — **to wait for dead men's shoes**. To await the death or removal of one so as to secure an advantage.  
And tis a general shrift, that most men use,  
But yet tis tedious *waiting dead men's shoes*

PHINEAS FLETCHER *Poems* 256

**dear, dearest**. Words that mean "held in tender affection, most beloved," in English literature mean also "deadly, most dangerous, deadliest."

Let us return,

And strain what other means is left unto us  
In our *dear* peril SHAKESPEARE *Timon of Athens* act v sc 2  
Would I have met my *dearest* foe in heaven,  
Ere I had ever seen that day SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act 1, sc 2

—**dear!** An exclamation of sorrow, regret, weariness, pity, surprise, or other emotion often followed by *me*, as, *dear! dear!* what a noise, oh, *dear!* my head aches *dear me!* is it so?

**death** in various senses occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases; as **sick unto death**. Dangerously ill, at the point of death — **to be death on**. To be skilled in or the master of, to be fond of, to be capable of

Fannie hasn't forgotten you *She was always death on* these English chaps  
FAWCETT *Gent of Leisure* I 9

—**to be done to death**. To be overcooked, hence, to be overworked, as a theme, killed *Done to death* by slanderous tongues SHAKESPEARE *Much Ado* act v sc 3

—**to be in at the death**. In fox-hunting, to be present when the hounds kill the fox used also figuratively

The empty fame of *being in at the death* WINDHAM *Speeches* Parl I 337  
—**to do to death**. To put to death, kill, slay — **to the death**. To the last extreme, until death comes, as, I will follow him *to the death*

Four generations of Stuarts had waged *war to the death* with four generations of Puritans  
MACAULAY *History of England* II, 207.

—**weary to death**. Tired to the point of exhaustion, extremely weary.

**death's door, at**. Near death; dangerously ill.

**death's-head**. 1. The skull of a human skeleton. 2. A hawk-moth because on its back it bears marks that resemble the skull of a human skeleton.

**death's-head on a mopstick, to look like a**. To have so wasted away, and become so pale through illness, that one's head and face look like a skull on a stick.

**decks, clear or sweep the**. See under **CLEAR**.



**de facto.** [L.] Actually or really existing or done distinguished from *de jure*.

The exercise of *de facto* authority is always a usurpation, and it maintains this character so long as it continues, or until it is legalized by proper legislative or other authority. In administrative law, the term *de facto* is commonly used to describe the exercise of illegal authority, but with apparent right and under color of legal authority.  
*New International Encyc*

**defeatists.** [Brit. and U. S. Pol.] Those persons, within the lines of the Entente during the World War, who doubted the ability of their people to defeat the Central Powers, and whose white-feathered propaganda of **defeatism** aimed to undermine the morale of the army.

It was when the situation was at its worst that the old "Tiger" took charge. He handled treason and *defeatism* by means of a prison and a firing squad.

*The Baltimore Evening Sun*, Nov. 13, 1918

**de jure.** [L.] By right of law; rightfully or legally distinguished from *de facto*.

States that are *de facto* independent without having anything to do with the question *de jure*.

*II MARTINEAU Soc. Am.* II 81

**delirium.** Frenzied rapture; uncontrollable emotion due to excitement from the original sense, a deranged state of mind due to imperfect functioning of the brain.

**delirium tremens.** A mental derangement attended by nervous agitation and fearful hallucinations, caused by excessive use of alcoholic liquors. Called also *D T's* and *blue devils*.

The *delirium tremens* of radicalism in which the unhappy patient imagines himself haunted by a thousand devils, who are not only men but Tories.

*Blackwood's Magazine* Jan., 1832

**demand, at or on.** On presentation: said of a note or draft payable at sight.

**demand, to be in.** To be in request or much sought after: as, a person with social gifts is *in great demand*.

**demi-monde.** A class of persons of equivocal reputation, said especially of "kept" women, who are not common courtezans, yet without social standing; also, less correctly, courtezans in general. In France four subclasses are distinguished—the *cocotte*, *griset*, *lorette*, and *femme entretenue*, or "kept" woman.—**demi-mondain.** Belonging to the *demi-monde*.—**demi-mondaine.** A member of the *demi-monde*.—**demi-mondainism.** A social system favorable to the development of the *demi-monde*. FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary*.

**demirep.** A woman of questionable chastity. BROWNING *Bishop Ploughman's Apology* st. 22.—**demirepdom.** The *demi-monde*.

**demnition.** Euphemistic form of *damnation* used especially in the phrase **gone or going to the demnition bow-wows**. Euphemism for "gone or going to the damnation dogs"; that is, gone or going to absolute or everlasting ruin.

"I beg it's little pardon," said Mr. Mantalini,

friend. He has gone to the *demnition bow-wows*."

"It's all up with its handsome friend."

DICKENS *Nick* II 32

**Democracy, the world must be made safe for.** A phrase used by former President Woodrow Wilson, April 2, 1917, interpreted to mean

that the continuance of the democratic principles on which the United States as a nation was founded must be assured.

**denature, denaturize.** To adulterate a substance such as alcohol, tea, etc., so as to change certain qualities and make unfit for drinking or eating without destroying other useful properties.

**departure, a new.** [U. S.] A fresh start.

**depend, on or upon.** To have full reliance; trust.

Give us a character on which we can thoroughly *depend*, . . . and it is wonderful how many brilliant qualities we can safely and gladly dispense with

DEAN STANLEY *Thoughts that Breathe*, 31.

**derrick.** A hangman: from the surname of a common hangman at Tyburn, about 1600.

He rides circuit with the devil, and *Derrick* must be his host, and Tyborne the inn at which he will light

DEKKER *Beltman of London* (1616)

**desk-room.** [U. S.] Space in a business office rented to a single person, or concern

Many of the operators as well as the smaller brokers, have simply *desk-room*

JAMES K. MEDBERY *Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, 117

**deuce, the.** The devil. Used in several idiomatic phrases.

In the popular mythology both of Kelt and Teutons there were certain hairy wood-demons called by the former *Dus* and by the latter *Scrat*. Our common names of *Deuce* and *Old Scratch* are plainly derived from these

LOWELL *Among my Books, Witchcraft*, p. 109

—**deuce may care.** Full of mischief or deviltry, devilish —**going to the deuce.** On the way to ruin —**go to the deuce!** Go to the devil! get out! go away! —**the deuce to pay.** Bad luck to it said by one in an awkward or embarrassing position, the devil to pay —**to play the deuce.** To annoy or vex, damage

**developing the country.** [U. S.] The mission of railways and other public service corporations, as stated by persons asking favors of the Government.

*Developing the country* . . . an argument constantly on the lips of those who were impounding the resources for themselves. It is a proverb in the Far West that the man who is *developing the country* thinks that he may appropriate whatever is not screwed down, and that whatever is screwed on may be unscrewed

BRUCE *Modern Democracies* II 157

**devil, the.** The prince and ruler of the kingdom of evil. Used in a number of idiomatic phrases implying evil, wickedness.

—**between the devil and the deep sea.** Between alternatives equally dangerous or discouraging, between Scylla and Charybdis —**give the devil his due.** To do full justice to a person or a cause —**go to the devil.** Go to ruin! go to the deuce! an imperative order for abrupt departure

Hold your tongue Junk, you are a libelous rascal. You, and your box, too, may go to the devil

T. DIBDEN *The Birthday* act 1 sc 2

—**Devil Dogs.** "Teufel Hunde": the Hun's pet name for the United States Marine Corps in the World War

The Germans gave them a new name, "*Teufel Hunde*," and "*Devil Dogs*" they proved to be

STORIES OF AMERICANS IN THE WORLD WAR 17.

—**devil-may-care.** Full of deviltry; heedless, careless, reckless, rollicking

He was a mighty free and easy, roving, *devil-may-care* sort of person, was my Uncle

DICKENS *Pickwick* xlix

—**devil of a.** An intensive expression, applied to persons or things; something irritating, detestable, or diabolical, as, a *devil of a nuisance*

Both within and without doors it was a *devil of a day*

SCOTT *Letters in Lockhart's Life*

—**devil's advocate.** An official whose business it is to raise objections to a candidate for canonization

Even the Socialist party regarded him as a *Devil's Advocate*, and washed their hands of him

**—devil's luck.** Unusually good fortune, exceptional luck from the belief that the singularly fortunate owed their luck to the prince of darkness — **devil take or catch the hindmost.** The last in the race, contest, or competition, must suffer — **devil to pay.** A great mishap, confusion, or mischief, serious perplexity or unforeseen trouble.

There will be *the devil to pay*, and there is no saying who will or who will not be set down in his bill

**—talk of the devil and he's sure to appear.** Speak of some one and he will come into sight said of a person who, being discussed in his absence, suddenly appears.

Since therefore 'tis to combat evil,

'Tis lawful to combat the Devil,

Forthwith *the Devil did appear*,

For name him, and he's always near

PRIOR *Hans Carvel*.

**—the devil!** An expletive, either bordering upon the profane or used humorously, expressing (a) An intensive negative, as, "*devil* a monk was he" (b) Surprise, disgust, etc. usually preceded by *the*, and often combined with *what*, *who*, *when*, *where*, or *how*

*Who the devil could have foreseen that?* MRS COWLEY *Belle's Strategem* act i sc 3.

*What the devil is all this about?* PEAKE *Comfortable Lodgings* act i sc 3.

**—to beat the devil's tattoo.** To manifest impatience or anxiety by tapping the floor with the feet, or drumming, as on a table, with the fingers

Mr Gawtrey remained by the fire *beating the devil's tattoo* upon the chimney piece

LYTTON *Night and Morning* III vi.

**—the devil rides on a fiddlestick.** Something strange or unexpected has happened

Heigh, Heigh! *the Devil rides upon a fiddlestick*, what's the matter?

SHAKESPEARE *I Henry IV* act ii, sc. 4.

**—to kick up devil's delight.** To create a disturbance, raise cane

His wives, five or six on 'em, was yowlin', and cryin' and *kicken up the devil's delight*.

WHYTE MELVILLE *General Bounce* XV.

**—to whip the devil round the stump.** [U S] To urge excuses in avoidance of responsibility or blame

There is a want of candor now, I perceive, in the statement of your affairs You are *whipping the devil around the stump* I see his foot

*The Evening Post*, New York, 1857.

**—when the devil is blind.** Never not even in a blue moon, or in a coon's age, or a month of Sundays, in the Greek Kalends

**dew-drink.** A drink taken before breakfast; a bracer.

**dialog, Socratic.** A form of dialog in which a person who is questioned so answers that he expresses the views of the questioner.

**diamond, rough.** A person of sterling qualities but lacking training and culture, hence, unpolished, as a diamond in its natural state.

Chaucer, I confess, is a *rough diamond*

DRYDEN *Preface to Fables*.

**diamond cut diamond.** Two very sharp persons' said of a contest between sharpers or wits well matched, as in repartee, business aptitude, etc.

**dick.** A corruption of *declaration*: used in to take one's dick, to declare positively; affirm as a fact — **up to dick.** Up to the mark or declaration; up to the standard, excellent, proper

**Dick.** A diminutive of *Richard*. — **Dick's hat-band.** The British crown as represented by the hat-band of Richard Cromwell when Lord Protector Used with qualifications, as *fine*, *queer* or *tight* as **Dick's hat-band** in derision.

**dick, spotted.** A suet pudding spotted with currants or raisins.

**dickens, the.** The deuce; the devil: used as an interjection.

I can not tell what the *dickens* his name is SHAKESPEARE *Merry Wives* act iii. sc. 2.

**—play the dickens with.** Same as *PLAY THE DEUCE* WITH

**dicker.** [U. S.] To trade by close bargaining; to arrange a deal.

**dickey.** 1. A detached linen shirt-front; false bosom. 2. A driver's outside seat of a carriage; also, one behind the body of the vehicle, as of a hansom-cab where the driver sits, or of a state or private carriage where the grooms sit. 3. A pinafore or bib. 4. [New Eng.] A high shirt-collar. 5. An under-petticoat. 6. [North Eng.] A leather apron; dick. 7. [North Eng.] A loose jacket of coarse linen worn by workmen; a slop. 8. [Gt. Brit.] A donkey.

**dicky.** In poor health; ailing; used especially in the phrase **all dicky with any one**. All up or over with; said of a hopeless case.

**die** (*v.*) is used idiomatically in a number of phrases:—as, **to die away**.

1. To faint or swoon. 2. To fade away. 3. To diminish or disappear gradually. 4. *Arch.* To merge into an adjacent structure — **to die back**. Same as **DIE DOWN**, 2. — **to die by inches**. To pass away gradually, waste away — **to die down**. 1. To subside gradually, die away. 2. *Bot.* Of plants, to die down as far as the ground while the underground portions survive, as perennials — **to die dunghill**. To die like a creature without mettle, i. e., like a cowardly barnyard fowl contrasted with **to die game**, to die valiantly, as a game-cock does — **to die hard**. 1. To die fighting for life. 2. To die in an impenitent state — **to die in harness**. To die in the midst of daily activities — **to die in one's bed**. To die of disease or old age, as opposed to a violent death — **to die in one's boots**, or **with one's boots on**. 1. Same as **TO DIE IN HARNESS**. 2. [Western U. S.] To die by violence, be killed in a quarrel — **to die in the last ditch**. To fight to the last extremity — **to die in the pain**. Literally, to pay the penalty of death, hence, to die in the attempt to do something — **to die off**. 1. To be removed one after another by death. 2. Of sounds, etc., to die away — **to die out**. 1. Of a family or race, to be gradually extinguished by death. 2. To pass away or become extinct by degrees — **to die the death**. To be put to death — **to die up**. To die off entirely, perish utterly — **to die well**. 1. [Eng.] To yield good meat said of beef-cattle. 2. To die in a state of grace.

**die is cast.** The choice is made; the deed is done which commits one to a certain line of conduct or course of action.

When he arrived at the banks of the Rubicon . . . he stopped to deliberate  
At last he cried out "*The die is cast!*" and immediately crossed the river

PLUTARCH *Life of Julius Cæsar*

**difference, split the.** Compromise by making equal concessions; meet each other half-way.

**dig in.** Work hard.—**dig out.** Leave suddenly.

**Digby chicken.** [Brit.] A herring smoked and cured at Digby, Nova Scotia.

**diggings.** [U. S. & Australian.] A mine; especially, a place where gold mining is carried on, whence, a dwelling- or lodging-place.

It was a goldfield and a *diggings* in far away Australia

ROLF BOLDREWOOD *Miner's Right* VII

My friend here wants to take *diggings*, and as you were complaining that you would get someone to go halves with you, I thought I had better bring you together

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE *Study in Scarlet* ch. i.

**dime novel.** [U. S.] A sensational story in paper covers sold for ten cents (a dime).

The boy who reads a *dime novel* wants to be a pirate

HENRY GEORGE *Progress and Poverty* 443.

**dimension, fourth.** A supposed or assumed dimension related to length, breadth, and thickness and analogous to the dimension of one of these in its relations to the other two. The conception has been used by some investigators to explain certain superphysical phenomena, which seem otherwise inexplicable

**dine** occurs in several idiomatic phrases; as, **to dine off**, to eat for dinner; make the dinner-meal of, as, *to dine off* bread and cheese—**to dine out**. To go without dinner: a euphemism—**to dine with Democritus**. To be served a Barmecide feast (q v). Democritus was the "laughing philosopher" of Greece, and his dinners are thus characterized as practical jokes—**to dine with Duke Humphrey**. To be deprived of dinner from the report that Humphrey Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester and youngest son of Henry IV, was starved to death. See SHAKESPEARE *II Henry VI* act iii, sc 2.

My Mistress and her mother must have *dined with Duke Humphrey*, had I not exerted myself in their behalf. SMOLLETT *Rod Random* lv.

—**to dine with Mohammed**. To dine in Paradise, i e., to die—**to dine with Sir Thomas Gresham**. To go dinnerless for lack of funds from the fact that penniless men frequented the stock-exchange (founded by Sir Thomas Gresham) during the dinner-hour.

**diner-out**. One who makes a practise of dining at the homes, hence, at the expense of his friends. Compare **TO DINE OUT**.

In the future, not even the most impecunious of *diners-out* must accept an invitation from Duke Humphrey. London *Daily Telegraph*, Jan 22, 1884.

**dip**. [U. S.] To rub on the gums; used in the phrase **to dip snuff**, to dip a stick into snuff and rub it on the gums and teeth, a practise to which some women in the southern United States are addicted. A **dip-stick** is made by chewing one end of a twig into a brush, which is then dipped into the snuff-box, and, with the powdered tobacco adhering, the brush is rubbed against the gums and teeth.

She was suspected of a mysterious habit denominated in Southern parlance "*dapping*"—in other words of chewing snuff. GUNN *New York Boarding Houses* 221.

**dirt** occurs in **dirt cheap**, of a very low price—**to eat dirt**. To be subjected to insult, be humiliated—**to fling or throw dirt or mud**. To abuse, slander, libel, calumniate, indulge in mud-slinging.

A wicked old tongue that could *throw dirt* with any man's or woman's either. OUIDA *Signa* I. xv.

**dirty dishes**. [Brit.] Poor relations.

**dirty linen**. Personal faults, foibles or mistakes. See WASH.

**discount, at a**. At less than the face value; below par; hence, not in favor or demand.

**discount a statement, or event, to**. To make allowance for effect or exaggeration: as **to discount the statements** of the natives.

**dished, to be**. To be used up, as a meal, hence, to be deprived or cheated out of.

**dispose** as a verb means "to set in order; arrange; place; regulate; adjust": but the word is used with various senses in **dispose of**, which means "get rid of, as by sale, free oneself of, as by giving to another, terminate, find a place or use for."

**ditto to, to say**. To acquiesce in or agree with another; to endorse statements or conclusions.

Two people who are going to be married ought to *say ditto to each other*. MRS H. WARD *Marcella* ii, 8.

**dive**. [U. S.] A drinking-place below the street level; hence, any disreputable resort.

**divide**. Something that acts as a line of demarcation.—**the Great Divide**. [U. S.] The Rocky Mountain watershed.—**to cross or go over the divide or the Great Divide**. To pass out of the world; die.

**dividend**. A sum of money to be distributed as a part of the earnings of a corporation.—**to declare a dividend**. To announce readiness to pay a designated dividend.—**to pass a dividend**. To fail to declare a dividend.

**divine right** or **divine right of kings**. The doctrine that the right to a throne has been conferred by God and is not limited or restricted by the rights of the people or the consent of the governed.

*The right divine of kings to govern wrong* POPE *The Dunciad* bk. iv, l. 188

**Dixie**. The southern part of the United States: from Mason and Dixon's line. Also, the name of several songs, especially the Southern war-song by D. D. Emmett (1859). The refrain of this song is:

In Dixie's land I take my stand,  
I'll live and die for Dixie

**do** or **do brown**. Swindle, cheat, defraud usually qualified in some way, or followed by *out of*; as, they *did me out of* all the money. Probably derived from *do thoroughly* as meat when roasted brown.

—**do a guy**. 1. [Brit.] To run away, escape

They all dispersed at once—to put it in their own language, *they did a guy*

*Answers* April 6, 1889

2. [U. S.] To attack with physical force, injure, beat up, or put out of business —**to be doing**. To be in course or process of being done, performed, produced, or the like, as, the cakes are *doing*, the presswork is *doing* —**to do a perish**. [Australia] To succumb to hunger, thirst, or want, in the bush —**do tell!** [U. S., New Eng.] Is it possible? you surprise me! an exclamation of surprise

*Do tell!* I want to know! Did you ever! Such a powerful right smart chance of learning as you have is enough to split your head open right smack

*St. Louis Herald*, April 11, 1853

—**to do away with**. To put an end to, dispense with, put away, remove, annul

—**to do by**. To act toward, treat, as, do as you would be *done by* —**to do for**. 1.

To answer the purpose or requirements of, as, this bed will *do for me*. 2. To look after the personal welfare or interests of, provide for, care for, as, I have nobody to *do for me*. 3. To ruin, or to injure, damage seriously, as, I am *done for* —

**to do for oneself**. To be self-supporting, do without assistance —**to do into**.

To make of the same or like form —**to do it up**. To achieve one's aim, accomplish

a purpose, obtain the desired result —**to do off**. To take off, as a hat, doff —**to do on**.

To put on, as clothing, don —**to do one proud**. To cause one to feel proud

—**to do one's best, one's diligence**, etc. To put forth one's best efforts —**to do one's business**.

To overthrow, undo, ruin one —**to do out**. To clean out, as a room or office —**to do over**. 1. To repeat the performance of, make over. 2.

To put or spread upon, cover, as with clay —**to do the trick**. To achieve one's

object, accomplish one's purpose

Edmund Kean then whispered in his son's ear "Charlie, we are *doing the trick*"

W. C. RUSSELL *Representative Actors* 476

—**to do time**. To serve out a sentence, as in a penitentiary —**to do to**. 1. Same

as to do by. 2. To put to or upon, apply, also, shut, as a door — **to do to death**.

To put to death, kill, slay. See under DEATH —**to do up**. 1. To tie up, as a parcel

2. To roll up or arrange in a coiffure, as the hair. 3. To make fresh and clean, as

a room by sweeping and dusting, etc.

"But who is to *do up* your room every day?" asked Violet

BESANT *Children of Gibeon* I, x.

4. To starch and iron, as muslin. 5. To fatigue, tire out, as, I am completely *done up*. 6. To ruin or put into bankruptcy —**to do with**. 1. To manage or get on with,

as, I don't know how to *do with* these people. 2. To use to advantage —**to do without**.

To dispense with —**to have done with**. To leave off, make an end of, be

through with, as *have done with* scheming —**to have to do with**. To have an inter-

est or part in, be connected or have business with

Insolent toward all who *have to do with her*

STEELE *Spectator* No. 33

**docket, on the**. [U. S.] Listed with cases ready for trial: said of a lawsuit.

**Doctors' Commons**. The college of doctors of civil law in London (1768-1857); also, the buildings occupied by them, where a registry of wills was kept and the Admiralty and various other courts were held. Figurative literary references to Doctors' Commons usually relate to marriage or divorce or to the probaton of wills, proceedings that now take place in the High Courts of Justice.

No choice was left his feelings or his pride

Save death or *Doctors' Commons* BYRON *Don Juan* I XXXVI.

**doctors disagree, when.** When there is a grave difference of opinion, matters must be left undecided

Who shall decide *when doctors disagree?*

POPE *Moral Essays* ep. iii.

**dodge the issue, question or vote.** [U S.] To evade, to avoid going on record.

**dodger.** [U S] 1. A handbill 2. A soft cake of corn-meal or maize.

**dog** is used figuratively for "fellow," in railery, as, a clever *dog*, and also derogatively, for a base, contemptible creature.

The palefaces make themselves *dogs* to their women

COOPER *Last of the Mohicans* p. 56.

—**a dead dog.** A person or thing of no use or value —**a dog's age** A very long time

—**a dog's death.** A wretched death —**call off the dogs.** Change the subject of conversation or turn it into another course said when a disagreeable topic is being discussed or an arduous discussion is taking place —**dog in the manger.** One who will neither enjoy a thing himself nor permit others to enjoy it, in allusion to the fable of the dog that stationed himself in a manger and would not let the ox eat the hay

Why what a *dog in the manger* you must be—you can't marry them both

MARRIAT *Japhet* LXXXII.

—**every dog has his day.** A time of action or of influence comes to everyone

Notwithstanding, as a *dog hath its day* so may I perchance have time to declare it in deeds

QUEEN ELIZABETH, in STRYPE *Eccles. Mem.* II xxviii 234.

—**give a dog a bad or ill name and hang him.** As well kill a man as defame or traduce him —**the dog of Montargis, or, Aubry's dog.** One who is faithful after death from *Dragon*, a dog proverbial for its intelligence and ferocity Aubry of Montdidier while strolling in the forest of Bondy with his dog *Dragon* in 1371 was murdered The dog later growled and snarled whenever Richard of Macaire appeared, with the result that he was condemned to judicial combat with the dog and was killed, but in his dying moments confessed to having committed the crime

No doubt Diogenes is there, and no doubt Mr. Toots has reason to observe him; for he comes straightway at Mr. Toot's legs, and tumbles over himself in the desperation with which he makes at him, like a very *dog of Montargis*

DICKENS *Dombey and Son*.

—**the dogs of war.** Fire, pestilence, famine and sword a Shakespearean expression used by many later writers

And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,

With Ate by his side, come hot from hell,

Shall in these confines, with a monarch's voice,

Cry, "Havoc," and let slip the *dogs of war*

SHAKESPEARE *Julius Caesar* act iii sc. 1.

—**the under dog.** The person at a disadvantage as in a contest —**to die like a dog.** To die a disgraceful or miserable death —**to give or throw to the dogs.** To discard as of no value —**to go, or drive to the dogs.** To go, or drive to ruin —**to lead, or lead one, a dog's life.** To live a subservient life, lead a miserable existence, be wretched, to be subject to insults, nagging, and faultfinding

They've been *leading him a dog's life* this year or more

HUGHES *Tom Brown at Oxford*. x

—**to help a lame dog over a stile.** To come to the aid of one who is in distress.

—**to put on dog.** To conduct oneself in a conceited manner —**yellow dog.** A

cur, mongrel, also, figuratively, a mean or malicious person —**to wake up a sleeping**

**dog.** To disturb some condition or person capable of causing trouble —**to let sleeping**

**dogs lie.** To take care not to alarm or disturb influences or persons that may

cause trouble —**you can't teach an old dog new tricks.** It is difficult to teach old

people to conform to new ways, old persons can not accustom themselves to new

methods, one who is set in his ways is not to be taught new ones.

**Dog** is used also in combination to indicate (1) animals of the male species; as, *dog-ape, dog-crab, dog-fox*, etc., and (2) plants that dogs feed on, as, *dog-grass, dog-weed, dogrose*, a plant once used as a remedy for hydrophobia It is used also to describe certain mechanical devices and certain inferior characteristics or qualities.

—**dog-cheap**. Absurdly or exceedingly cheap —**dog-days**. The hot, sultry season of summer during parts of July and August so called from the fact that the rising of the dog-star (Sirius) is, during that period, coincident with the rising of the sun, now usually counted from July 3 to Aug 11 —**dog-ear, dog's ear**. Turn down the leaves in a book

Over his *dog-eared* spelling book He cherished his ambition

—**dog-in-a-blanket**. A roly-poly pudding, a rolled currant dumpling or jam pudding

Bubble and squeak is a colloquialism, and no more slangy than "toad in the hole" or *dog in a blanket* G A SALA in *Illustrated London News*, Feb 12, 1887

—**dog-Latin**. Crude, barbarous, mongrel Latin, hog-Latin

"Nescio quid est materia cum me," Sterne writes to one of his friends (in *dog Latin*, and very sad *dog Latin* too)

—**dog one's footsteps**. To follow insidiously and indefatigably, harry, annoy; harass —**dog's-age**. A comparatively long time —**dog's-nose**. [Eng.] A mixed drink made of warmed porter, gin, nutmeg and powdered sugar

*Dog's nose* your committee finds, upon inquiry, to be compounded of warm porter, moist sugar, gin and nutmeg

—**dog-watch**. One of two watches aboard ship, each of two hours, between 4 and 8 P M

**dolce far niente**. [It.] Sweet indolence, pleasant inactivity, delightful idleness

It is there that the *dolce far niente* of a summer evening is most heavenly  
LONGFELLOW *Life* I 187

**doldrums, in the**. In low spirits, in the dumps; depressed: originally nautical in allusion to parts of the ocean, near the Equator, where calms abound

**dolled up**. [U S.] In one's best clothes, in formal toilette; dressed like a doll, frequently heard in the phrase, **all dolled up and no where to go**. Dressed up for no purpose

**don't you know?** Used interrogatively for "Are you not aware?" but generally injected into conversation to get the attention of one spoken to, or to gain time to think of something else to say, by persons of nervous temperament.

**door** is used in a few idiomatic phrases, as, **be at the door**. Impending; imminent —**next door to**. Bordering on, near to, close by, as, he is *next door to* bankruptcy used originally to indicate a dwelling next to the one inhabited, as we live *next door to* the fire-station —**to lay at one's door**. To charge with responsibility for, accuse —**to lie at one's door**. To be the cause of

The fault *lies* wholly *at my door* DRYDEN in Preface to Dufresnoy's *Art of Painting* —**to throw open the door to**. 1. To take the risk of admitting something not welcome 2. To extend one's hospitality to

**door-step**. [Brit.] A thick slice of bread and butter, or jam.

A very common request at Lockhart's coffee-houses in London is for a *door-step* and a sea-rover, i.e., for a halfpenny slice of bread and butter and a herring

*The Spectator*, London, May 3, 1890

**Dorcas society**. A women's society for supplying garments to the poor: in allusion to *Dorcas* named in *Acts* ix, 39.

**dot and carry one**. 1. Plod systematically; proceed with great deliberation.

I was not new to violent death I have served His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, and got a wound at Fontenoy, but I know my pulse went *dot and carry one* STEVENSON *Treasure Island* IV xvi.

2. A person who limps in walking.

The conversation hobbled along in the discontinuous, *dot and go one* fashion that conversations sometimes affect J HAWTHORNE *Fort Fool* I. xx



**double.** 1. A person who resembles another so closely as to be mistaken for him or her. 2. [Eng.] A glass of spirituous liquor containing as much again as the measure sold.

**double-cross.** 1. [Brit.] Agree to lose, and then do one's best to win. 2. [U. S.] Take money from two factions or opposing interests, and betray both; sell out; turn.

Teemer did not deny that a *double-cross* was brought off. Teemer promised to sell the match, and finished by selling those who calculated on his losing.

*The Referee*, London, Aug. 21, 1887.

A New York boss in the early eighties testified before an investigating committee that when a constituent asked a favor he made a record of the name and fact, and, if he intended to grant the petition, marked a cross after the name. Sometimes, however, he would change his mind, in which case he added a second cross to the name. In his testimony he would say, "I crossed Smith," "I *double-crossed* Jones," etc.

**double-dealing.** Treachery; deception; duplicity.

**double entendre.** A word or phrase that can be interpreted either of two ways, as it has two meanings of which the less obvious one is often of doubtful propriety: an incorrect idiom, unknown to French that has, however, **double entente** which means "double sense."

**double-first.** In Oxford University one who gains the highest honors, both in classics and mathematics, corresponding to **double-man** in Cambridge; also, the distinction itself.

**double-header.** 1. [Brit.] A false coin with a head on both sides, made by soldering two halves of split coins together. 2. [U. S.] A double event, as when two games of baseball are played by the same teams on the same day.

**double-line.** [Brit.] A shipwreck: in the plural, shipping casualties: from the manner in which they are printed on Lloyd's List.

**double-meaning.** A word or phrase that is open to either of two interpretations, especially when used to bring out a secondary indecous sense, hence, deceitful; equivocal.—**double-meaner.** One given to equivocation; an equivocator, a deceiver.

These are ever harping upon things they ought not to allude to, and deal mightily in *double-meanings*, for your *double-meaners* are dispersed through all parts of town or city.

STEELE *Spectator* No. 504

He has deceived me like a *double-meaning* prophesier

SHAKESPEARE *All's Well that Ends Well* act iv, sc. 3

**double or quits.** A gamester's offer that the stake already due be doubled, or cancelled, on another wager.

I thought to play *double or quit*

SIDNEY *Arcadia* III 242

**doughboy.** 1. [U. S.] An American soldier in the World War, regardless of arm of service or rank.

Originally it referred only to an enlisted infantryman, but the A. E. F. applies it to all branches and all grades of the service.

*The Stars and Stripes*

2. In the Civil War, at first the large brass buttons on the infantrymen's uniforms, and later the wearers of these buttons. 3. [Gt. Brit.] A boiled dumpling of raised dough served on shipboard.

(2) She was so accustomed to fast riding with our Cavalry. She does not know how to treat a *doughboy*.

MRS. CUSTER *Letter*, March, 1867

(3) Each man also had a *dough-boy* made with  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of flour and boiled in the soup.

*Pall Mall Budget*, London, Aug. 22, 1887

**doughface.** [U. S.] A Northerner who favored slavery in the South. Possibly John Randolph of Roanoke, who coined the word, meant **doe-faced**.

Randolph termed it [the Missouri compromise] "a dirty bargain, helped on by eighteen northern *dough-faces*." SCHOULER *United States* III, 166

**doughnut.** Twists of sweet dough cooked brown in boiling oil or fat.

*Dough-nut-day*, Shrove Tuesday (Baldock, Herts, England) It being usual to make a good store of small cakes fried in hog's lard, placed over the fire in a brass skillet, called *dough-nuts* Notes and Queries Seventh series V, 302

**down** is used in the following idiomatic phrases —**be down on.** Regard with disfavor or anger, have a grudge against, assail, snub, or berate

The critics would have been *down on* the author as an absurd bungler

MRS LYNN LINTON *Christ Arkland* II vi 196

—**down at the heels.** In poor circumstances as one whose poverty compels him to wear shoes with heels worn —**down in the dumps, or mouth.** Low spirited; discouraged, as one having the corners of the mouth drawn downward —**down on one's luck.** In ill-luck, suffering from misfortune, hence, despondent, depressed.

—**down to the ground.** Completely, thoroughly, to the ultimate degree

A name that suited him well—*down to the ground*, the officers of the Royal Horse said

JOHN STRANGE *Winter That Imp* 3

—**downfall.** A debacle a fall as from a position of influence, power, wealth, etc.

—**downhearted.** Dispirited, dejected

**downy, to do the.** To go to bed: in allusion to the down used for stuffing beds.

This'll never do, Giglamps! Cutting chapel to *do the downy*

C BEDE *Verdant Green* II 59

**drag in or into.** Bring in needlessly or irrelevantly; introduce or inject unnecessarily as something irrelevant in the course of a discussion.

**dragons' teeth, to sow.** To create strife or ill-feeling: from the legend of Cadmus who slew a terrible dragon, and was commanded to sow its teeth in the earth. On doing this armed men arose from the furrow in which the teeth had been sown and they fought one with another, but the survivors helped Cadmus to build Thebes.

**draw** is used idiomatically in **draw amiss**, be misled; follow the wrong clue —**draw it mild.** 1. Refrain from exaggeration or excess, be more gentle used as an injunction to be moderate, to express incredulity or to show derision The antithesis of *come it strong* 2. Applied to draft beer, the phrase serves to distinguish *mild* ale from bitter

(1) *Draw it mild*, as the boy with the decayed tooth said to the dentist *Punch* I 60

—**draw on.** 1. Approach, be near at hand, as, the time *draws on* 2. Cause; bring about, on, occasion, also, entice —**draw one out.** Lead one to express his thoughts and feelings

He had the art of *drawing people out*

Without their seeing what he was about

BYRON *Don Juan* X, lxxxii

—**draw or pull the wool over one's eyes.** Deceive one by blinding him to the truth —**draw rein, bit or bridle.** Tighten the rein, ride slowly or stop

Surrey rode without *drawing bridle* to Berwick TYTLER *Hist Scots* I 55

—**draw the line.** Fix the limit, refuse to go further —**draw up.** 1. Put in the required or legal form of writing, as a deed or will

That he could *draw up* an argument in his sermon, or a hole in his breeches

STERNE *Tristram Shandy* I, x

Our fathers, the pilgrims, before they left the vessel . . . *drew up* a simple constitution of government EVERETT *Orations and Speeches* 15

2. Set or form in array, as, the troops *draw up* in line 3. [Scot.] Arrive on time, get to a rendezvous and attend, halt or stop

—**to be quick on the draw.** [U. S.] To be handy and rapid in the drawing of a revolver or pistol —**to draw a blank.** 1. To be unsuccessful, as in an enterprise

2. [U. S.] To drill a dry hole in oil-well drilling —**to draw a cover.** To beat a cover

so as to drive out the game —to draw back. To receive again, as duties paid on goods imported, also, to draw off —to draw breath. To breathe —to draw in. 1. To allure, inveigle 2. To draw through the loops of a heddle or harness in accordance with the pattern to be produced said of warp-threads 3. To cover (book-cover boards) with leather —to draw interest. To produce interest, as a promissory note —to draw it level. 1. To equal the score of an opponent or opposing team, as in bowling, cricket, etc. 2. To tell the truth —to draw off. 1. To withdraw. 2. To assume an offensive position, as if to strike 3. To cause to flow from; as, to draw off the lees —to draw out. To extend, lengthen, prolong, as, to draw out a sermon —to draw over. To cause to leave one side or party for another —to draw the fire. 1. To remove burning fuel from a grate, furnace, or the like 2. To incite the aim and discharge of the enemy's firearms by offering oneself or others, or some object, as a mark —to draw the jacks. To depress the sinkers in a loom so as to make double loops —to draw or pull the leg. [Scot.] To play a joke on, deceive —to draw to a head. To approach a crisis, come to a climax

**drawn.** Equally contested; undecided, as, a *drawn* battle; a *drawn* game.

**dreadful.** [Brit.] A sensational story or publication: usually in the phrase **a penny dreadful.** Compare SHILLING SHOCKER.

**dress-circle.** A section of a theater, usually comprising the best seats in the first or lower gallery. So-called from the rule that occupants were required to be attired in evening dress.

**drissing or dressing-down.** A scolding or severe reprimand; thrashing or flogging.

"The Scourge" flogged him heartily . . . and "the Penny Voice of Freedom" gave him an awful *dressing* THACKERAY *Newcomes* XXVIII.

**dress up.** Don one's best attire, dress in an elaborate manner.

**drink** is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **to drink deep.** 1. To take a full draft, hence, to absorb completely

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing,  
*Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring*

POPE *Essay on Criticism* 215.

2. To drink to excess —**To drink down** To quench the thought or memory of by drinking, as, to *drink down* sorrow —to **drink health** to or to the health of. To wish well to the person or persons named with the draft, toast —to **drink in.** To absorb, receive with eagerness —to **drink like a fish.** To be very fond of alcoholic drink and drink to excess, an idiotism —to **drink of.** To receive a portion of, literally or figuratively, as, he shall *drink of* the cup —to **drink off.** To drink the whole at a draft —to **drink to.** To drink health or success to, signify one's desire of by drinking

Let the toast pass!

*Drink to the lass!*

I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass

SHERIDAN *School for Scandal* act iii, sc 3

—to **drink up.** To consume all there is in one's glass

**drive.** [U. S.] An organized, and frequently a country-wide, effort to raise funds for some specific object: as, a Red Cross *drive*; Armenian relief *drive*. The word is used also idiomatically in the following phrases:

—**drive at.** Strive to accomplish a certain end, speak or write to some particular purpose

Mankind at large will not listen to a word about these propositions unless it first learns what the author is *driving at* M ARNOLD *Ess Crit* IX 387

—to **drive a good or hard bargain.** To exact more than one is justly entitled to

—to **drive one to the wall.** To force one to an extremity —to **drive the cross**

or nail. To hit the center of a target with an arrow or bullet —to **drive the or a**

nail home. To make a matter certain, push an argument to convincing conclusion

—to **let drive.** To discharge a shot or blow

**drop** is used idiomatically in the following phrases: **drop anchor.** [Brit.]

1. In horse-racing, to pull up a horse. 2. To sit or settle down —**drop in.** To hap-

pen in, as for a chat, call, lunch, dinner, etc —**drop in the bucket** or ocean. A minute quantity

The Eternal Maker of all things, to whom the Whole Globe is but a *drop of the bucket* W FREEKE *Selected Essays* XXXIII 206

The dealings of my trade were but a *drop of water in the ocean* of my business

DICKENS *Christmas Carol* I

—**to get or have the drop on.** [U. S.] To cover a man with a pistol, revolver, or gun before he is on guard, and thereby have him in one's power

So expert is he with his faithful pistol that the most scientific of rogues have repeatedly failed to *get the drop on him* A K McCCLURE *Rocky Mountains* 233.

—**drop off.** 1. To go away or leave, especially one by one, as, an audience *drops off* 2. To fall quietly asleep 3. To die

He would probably *drop off quietly* with suppressed gout

G ALLEN *Phylstra*, II 56

—**to drop out.** To withdraw, as from one's business associates or circle of friends, as, the countess *dropped out of society* —**to drop the curtain.** 1. To end the performance 2. To close an incident, terminate a story —**to like or take a drop.** To like or take a drink, to tipple, to drink hard

The captain's servant *liked a drop* as well as his master M HUNTER *Journal* 21

—**to take or have a drop too much.** To be intoxicated

I went to the Chequers and *had a drop too much* J. PAYN *Myst Mrbridge* II xi

**drowning men catch at straws.** Men in danger seek to save themselves by clinging to anything—even to that which is not merely futile but absurd

**drown the miller.** Have too much of a good thing; in allusion to the proverb, "too much water drowned the miller." Hence, to add too much water to spirits or to dough

**drug in the market.** Any commodity that is unsellable, especially from an oversupply

**drum-fire.** Continuous artillery-fire on so large a scale that the reports resemble the roll of a drum.

**dry.** [U. S.] Consuming no alcoholic liquors; non-alcoholic; said of a nation, state or district in which the sale of alcoholic drink is forbidden by law When the manufacture or transportation of alcoholic liquor is illegal, the condition is referred to as **bone dry**.

**dry bones, shaking or stirring of the.** A renewal of life or activity where all seems dead See quotation

There was a *shaking*, and the bones came together, bone to his bone And the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceedingly great army *Ezekiel xxxvii 7-10*

But greater comparatively—than when the *dry bones* of politics are stirred

Temple Bar, 1887.

**dry-up.** Keep silent; stop talking; shut up; frequently used imperatively. D. T.'s. Delirium tremens.

**dub.** 1. [Brit.] A master-key, or in a broader sense, any kind of key. 2. [U. S.] A person of inferior mentality or physique; a simpton or good for nothing; a dud. Socialists use the term to designate the bourgeois voter.

**duck or duck's-egg.** [Gt. Brit.] In cricket, a failure to score in a game or innings; hence, nothing.

His fear of a *duck*—as, by a pardonable contraction from *duck's egg*—a naught is called in cricket play *St Paul's Magazine*, Aug, 1868.

**ducks and drakes, to make, or to play at ducks and drakes.** To

squander; also, to derange or upset recklessly with *of* or *with*, from the throwing of stones into water. See quotation below

The common play of making *ducks and drakes*, that is, throwing a flat stone in a direction nearly horizontal against a surface of water, and thus making it rebound, proves the elasticity of water

Nat Philos Hydrostatics I 2

Mr Locke Harper found out, a month after his marriage, that somebody had made *ducks and drakes* of all his wife's property

DINAH M CRAIK, *Agatha's Husband* 328

**dud.** A shell that failed to explode as from a defective bursting charge; hence, a dummy, a blank, a dead one: said of a person lacking energy or initiative.

**dude.** [U. S.] A dandy, fop; swell, masher.

*Dudes* and roughs, Civil Service reformers and office holding bosses, join in midnight conferences

BRYCE *American Commonwealth* II, 642.

Our novels establish a false ideal in the American imagination, and the result is the mysterious being "*The Dude*" ANDREW LANG *Longman's Magazine*, March, 1886.

**duds.** Belongings, effects; particularly clothing especially when worn.

**dull as ditch-water.** Stale and stagnant, as the water that collects in a ditch; wholly uninteresting.

**dumb, or dumb as an ox or oyster.** Mute or speechless: a word occurring in many proverbial phrases.

A whole family *dumb as oysters*

FOOTE *Lame Lover* II 61

**dum-dum bullet.** A half-covered steel-cased bullet which expands or flattens on impact by reason of its soft core so named from *Dumdum*, near Calcutta, the seat of the ammunition-factory for the Indian army

During their advance the Americans had been fired upon by Austrian machine guns using *dum-dum* bullets Major Somerville of Seattle has forwarded a number of the bullets to the headquarters of the American Military Mission

*Associated Press* Dispatch, Nov 1, 1918

**dump.** 1. A gloomy state of mind, melancholy now used only in the plural, and humorously. 2. A dowdy abode or lodging.

**Dunbar wether.** [Brit.] A herring, fresh, salted or smoked.

**Dundrearies.** Long side whiskers, so-called from those worn by the elder Sothern as Dundreary in Tom Taylor's "Our American Cousin"

Bushy black whiskers, more like the antiquated *Dundreary* type than modern fashion permits

F ANSTLEY, *Vice Versa* XVII

**durance vile.** Wearisome confinement; imprisonment, constraint

**dust in one's eyes, to throw.** To deceive or mislead one, especially by confusing statements; to bamboozle.

It required a long discourse to *throw dust in the eyes* of common sense

BENJ FRANKLIN *Works* IV 79

**dust off or out of, or get up and dust.** [U. S.] To ride or go quickly; to leave hurriedly.

He's throwing dust, but he *dusted off* with the horse all the same

A A PUTNAM *Ten Years a Police Judge* XVII.

**dust one's jacket.** To baste; to thrash; to criticise severely.

If he will turn to Theocritus, V, 119, he will learn that there is a good and respectable Greek ancestry for the cant phrase, *to dust one's jacket*

*Saturday Review*, London, April, 1865

**dust, to bite the.** To be mortified or shamed; be defeated, wounded, or slain.

In the course of half an hour, he had twice *bitten the dust*

C J. ANDERSON *Lake Ngami* 94.

**dust, to kick up or raise a.** To make a disturbance.

This particular concerning Tithes hath raised no little dust in the Church of God

BISHOP HALL *Cases Consc* 220

Several of the company not satisfied—in the language of the Bucks—kicked up a dust  
Westminster Magazine II 380

**dusty, not so.** [Brit.] Not so bad, so so.

B Company has come up very well, I said . . . they?

They're none so dusty, now are

KIRLING *Many Inventions*, p 173

**Dutch auction.** An auction at which the auctioneer begins with a high price which he reduces gradually until he receives a bid.

Puts up garrisoned fortresses and coaling stations at Dutch auction, and lets Colonies run loose  
Punch Feb 21, 1885

**Dutch concert.** A medley of songs or verses sung by different persons at the same time, or in succession, and followed by a popular chorus.

And now the Demon of Politics envied even the harmony arising from this Dutch concert  
Scott Waverley XI

**Dutch courage.** False or temporary courage inspired by or as by intoxicating drink; also, the drink itself: a phrase arising from wide use of Dutch gin or Hollands.

A dose of brandy, by stimulating the circulation, produces Dutch courage, as it is called  
SPENCER *Study of Sociology* VIII

**Dutch have taken or captured Holland.** Stale information, as Queen Anne or Queen Bess is dead, all is quiet on the Potomac; the Ark rested on Mt. Ararat.

**Dutchman, if I do I'm a.** I'm a fool if I do (anything of the kind): in allusion to the foolishness displayed by Van Tromp when, having defeated the British, he sailed up the English Channel with a broom nailed to his masthead, for he was defeated and killed off the Texel shortly after (July 31, 1653).

Cope mentioned a good specimen of English-French, and the astonishment of the French people who heard it, not conceiving what it could mean—"Si je fais, je fais, mais si je fais, je suis un Hollandais." "If I do, I do, but if I do, I'm a Dutchman"

EARL RUSSELL *Memoirs of Thomas Moore*.

**Dutch, that beats the.** That surpasses everything.

Our cargoes of meat, drink and cloaths beat the Dutch!

Revolutionary Song New Eng Hist Reg April 1857

**Dutch treat.** An entertainment at which each participant pays his share.

You'll come along too, won't you? Lancelot demanded of Ormizon! Dutch treat, vous savez!  
Lippincott's Mag August, 1887

**Dutch uncle, to talk like a.** To reprove severely, to rebuke sternly.

**dyed in the wool or in the grain.** Completely impregnated, as with dye; hence, fixed; enduring; steadfast in principle.

If he had not through institution and education (as it were) dyed in wool the manners of children  
NORTH *Plutarch* 65. (1679)

For my part, I'm a dyed-in-the-wool Rebel and don't think I'll fade in the washing

WILL N. HARBEN *The Georgians*, 209

## E

**each** is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, **at each**: One connected with the other; "each joined to the other" (Nares Glossary 1904, p. 267). The phrase occurs in Shakespeare's lines.

Ten masts at *each* make not the altitude

Which thou hast perpendicularly fallen *King Lear* act iv, sc. 6.

In this quotation the sense is clearly "one above the other" or "end on end," but the commentators have suggested "at least," "attached" and "at reach"—**each for all**. One for the many. Compare ALL FOR EACH.

Nature works on a method of all for each and *each for all* EMERSON *Farming*.  
—**each other**. Each one the other, loosely, one another

**eager**. Sour, bitter; hence, sharp; keen.

Vex him with *eager* words

SHAKESPEARE *III Henry VI*, act ii, sc. 6.

It is a nipping and an *eager* air

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act i, sc. 4.

—**eager with hunger**. Famished

**Eagle**. [U. S.] A ten dollar gold coin; hence **Double-Eagle**, a twenty dollar gold coin **Half-Eagle**, a five dollar gold coin.

The *Eagle* containing 10 dollars of 50 d. is worth 2 guineas, and rather more

*Gazette of the U. S.*, New York, July 14, 1789

**ear** is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **about one's ears**. All around one—**all ears**. Listening intently, full of attention—**box one's ears**. Slap one on the ears with the palm of the hand—**by the ears**. In close quarters—**ear-finger**. The little finger or pinkie—**ear-shot**. The distance within which sounds may be heard—**little pitchers have long ears**. Children are listening to what is being said—used in warning—**over head and ears**. Thoroughly submerged in or engrossed, with all one's might—**to be on one's ear**. To be aroused, as for an effort, also, to be angered into action or exasperated—**to give ear to**. To pay attention to, harken, heed—**to incline one's ear**. To hear with favor, to heed.  
—**to set by the ears**. To cause discord between—**to speak in one's ear**. To whisper to one—**to walk off on one's ear**. To go away enraged—**up to the ears**. Almost covered, as one sinking, deeply and irrecoverably involved or absorbed with; almost at the end of one's resources

She was in love with him *up to the ears* for the sake of his spreading glory.

*The Pagan Prince* 1690

**early**, by extension of its meaning "in advance, as regards time," to figurative uses, is employed idiomatically as in **early bird**: One who rises before his fellow men, hence, a wideawake person—**early master, soon knave**. [Scot.] A master who rises to watch his servants will soon be doing his own work.  
—**early purl**. [Brit.] Hot beer and gin a cold morning drink—**early ripe early rotten**. Quickly matured or developed prematurely decayed or dissolved, said of plans or any matter not carefully considered or thought out before action is taken—**early start makes easy stages**. A timely beginning enables one to proceed with leisure, as on a journey—**to rise or wake up early**. To be astir or awake before one's associates or competitors; hence, to take advantage of opportunity, as the early bird who catches the worm

They must *rise early* that would cheat her of her money

SWIFT *Polite Conversation* Dialog 3.

For to get me on the hop, or on my tibby drop,

You must *wake up very early* in the morning VANCE *Broadside Ballad*

**earnest**. Strongly bent toward (an action); serious; intent on: used idiomatically; as, **in earnest**: With serious purpose and determination.

Your cold hypocrisy's a stale device,

A worn out trick 'woud'st thou be thought in *earnest*?

Clothe thy feigned zeal in rage, in fire, in fury!

ADDISON *Cato* act i, sc. 3.

—**earnest money or penny**. Money deposited as a guarantee or pledge to confirm or ratify a bargain.

I dooe with this simple token or poore *earnest pennie* geve due testimonie of my good hert toward Your Majestee

ELLIOT *Dictionary* Dedication to Queen Elizabeth, 1559.

**earth** occurs in several idiomatic phrases; as, **lady of my earth**: Mistress of my lands or my estate, an heiress. from the Gallicism *fille de terre*, daughter of the earth

Earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,

She is the hopeful *lady of my earth*

SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* act 1, sc 2.

I am not yet so lost in lexicography, as to forget that words are the *daughters of the earth*, and that things are the sons of heaven

SAMUEL JOHNSON in the Preface of his *Dut. of the Eng. Language*

—**to run to earth**. To trace to its origin or pursue until found from the hunting of animals to their burrows or hiding-places —**what earthly use**. What possible or conceivable use usually as an expletive —**what on earth**. Of all things on earth what used as an expletive

**ease** is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **at ease**: In a state that is free from bodily or mental discomfort or concern, hence, **stand at ease**. A military order to permit of relaxation of position, with or without arms

So the ladies sat in a circle, and the gentlemen *stood at ease*, tired out before the close of the evening

*Harper's Magazine*, March 1888

—**ease her**! The command given to slacken the speed of a marine engine

The dirty lad below, whose exclamation of "*ease her—stop her—one turn ahead*"—may one day be destined to give the word of command on the quarter deck

*Punch* I 35.

—**ill at ease**. Anxious and uncomfortable

I am very *ill at ease*, unfit for mine own purposes SHAKESPEARE *Othello* act III, sc 3

—**to ease away**. To slack gradually, as a rope or sail

She ran like a phantom to the windward of us, and *eased away* her sheets fore and aft.

*Daily Telegraph*, London, July 5, 1881.

—**to take one's ease**. To make oneself comfortable, to enjoy one's leisure

**east**. In general, any region in the eastern part of a country or to the eastward of another taken as a standpoint; as, the *east* of England. Specifically, in modern use the **Near East** designates the lands to the east of the Mediterranean, or the region to the east of Palestine, or the countries of southwestern Asia, as Afghanistan, Persia, Asia Minor, Arabia, and Turkey in Europe, and the **Far East** indicates China, Japan, Eastern Siberia and adjacent territories, Taiwan, Sakhalin, etc. In the United States, New England is colloquially spoken of as **down east**, and to the New-Englanders generally **down east** is the eastern portion, especially Maine; to the inhabitants of the Mississippi valley **the east** is the region between the Alleghenies and the sea, while the dweller on the Pacific coast regards as **the East** everything east of the Rocky Mountains —**about east**. [New England] About right, properly

**Eastern Question**. One of two political problems concerning the affairs in eastern Europe or eastern Asia Specifically: 1. In European politics, the complications arising out of the possession by the Turks of the east of Europe and the possibility of Russian predominance in the Aegean consequent upon the need by Russia of an outlet at the south 2. The problem that involves the relations of Russia toward the Mongolian races in the Far East, and the rights of the European powers in that region

**easy** means primarily "not difficult or wearisome"; by extension, "balanced" as in **honors are easy**, that is, the honors are equally divided between adversaries as honor cards in some games, hence, there is no advantage to either party in a controversy —**easy mark** [U S] One who is easily imposed upon, a trusting, good natured person, easily victimized, a pigeon

**easy come, easy go**. Obtained without much effort, spent freely.

**eat** is used idiomatically in the following phrases, as **to eat crow, dirt, dog**, etc., to swallow one's words or do that which one has declared one would not do; submit to humiliation. See quotation.



To refuse to participate [in a dog-feast] would anger the Indians. But if, when the plate of dog was offered, one put a dollar on the plate, and passed it to one's neighbors the latter took the dollar and *ate the dog*. From this custom the slang phrase of politicians, *eat dog* for another, originated.

BISHOP WHIPPLE *Lights and Shadows* 264  
—to eat humble pie. To eat pie made from the umbles and numbles (kidneys, lights, liver, and entrails) of an animal, especially a deer, a dish formerly served to huntsmen and servants. Hence, to eat homely fare, whence the proverbial application, *to eat one's words*, humiliate one-self, make apologies —to eat one out of house and home. To impoverish another by depending entirely upon him for support, especially in a selfish, wasteful manner —to eat one's bread and salt, to eat one's salt, to eat salt with one. To sit at one's table as a guest —to eat one's boots, hat, or head. To indicate one's readiness to do the impossible used as an asseveration with a negative force, usually to indicate disinclination.

"Well, if I knew as little as that, I'd *eat my hat*, and swallow the buckle whole," said the clerical gentleman.

DICKENS *Pickwick* XLII  
—to eat one's head off. To cost more for feeding than one's services are worth, to be idle.

I'd rather keep her for a week than a fortnight, I can tell you, she'd *eat her head off* in a month, and no mistake.

SMEDLEY *Frank Fairfax* XIV.  
—to eat one's heart. To waste with care and trouble, pine away, repine.

He could not rest, but *did his stout heart eat*.

SPENSER *Fairy Queen* I 11 6  
—to eat one's terms, or for the bar. [Brit.] To observe the regulations that require students for the bar to dine in the Hall of the Inns of Court at least three times in each of the twelve terms before they are called to the bar.

He had already begun to *eat his terms*.

MACAULAY *Pitt* Misc II. 312.  
—to eat the air. To be deluded with false hopes, to be fed with promises —to eat up. [Brit.] 1. To vanquish, overrun, ruin.

On they swept, *eating up* the country.

FROUDE *Cæsar* V, 42  
2. [U S.] To accomplish, to work rapidly.

echo, to applaud to the. To applaud loudly, resoundingly, with enthusiasm.

I would *applaud thee to the very Echo*,

That should applaud again.

SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* act v, sc 3.

edge occurs in the following idiomatic phrases —to edge away or on. To move away by degrees, bear off gradually, as a ship from the land —to edge down upon. To approach gradually and obliquely —to edge in. To enter or to introduce cautiously or with difficulty —to edge in with. To approach, said of a pursuing vessel —to be on edge. To be eager or impatient —to have an edge on. [U S.] To be intoxicated —top edge. [Eng.] The upper edge or head (of a book) —to play with edge-tools. To sport with any dangerous or mischievous matter, trifle with any subject requiring caution.

The man who *plays with edge-tools* may, by chance, cut his fingers. HUTTON *Autob* 27.  
—to set on edge. 1. To place or stand on the edge. 2. To make keen or eager stimulate —To set the teeth on edge. To cause an unpleasant sensation, as by biting into a bitter or too acid fruit, or into some gritty substance.

Last peradventure we take chalk for cheese, which will *edge our teeth* and cause indigestion.

LATIMER *Serm and Reman* 347.

edge-ways, not to get a word in. Not to have a chance to participate in the argument or conversation; to be out-talked or out-spoken.

effect, in. Actually; in fact as opposed to in appearance.

The duties are paid by the purchaser, but the charge *in effect*, falls upon the importer.

COLEBROOK *Husbandry Bengal* 37.

effect, to give or take. To go or put into operation; to produce its effect; begin operation.

—The Administration was willing to *give effect* to the arrangements.

WILSON *Brit India* 1 529.

The stratagem *took effect*, the English began to fly on all sides.

GOLDSMITH *Hist Eng* 11 62.

**egg** is used symbolically, as of plans or possessions, in the following phrases:  
**to bring one's eggs to a bad** (or, sarcastically, **fair, fine**) **market**. To fail in some business or scheme — **to put all one's eggs in one basket**. To risk one's all in one speculation or scheme, have one's property all in one place — **to tread on eggs**. To walk warily and light, as on delicate or dangerous ground — **eggs are eggs, as sure as**. Quite certain, assuredly. Probably derived from "As sure as  $x$  is  $x$ ," dictum in logic.  
 I shall come out bottom of the form as sure as eggs is eggs

**to teach one's grandmother to roast or suck eggs**. To lecture one's elders or seniors to teach one's grandmother to knit. To waste time and effort in futile things.

**egg**. [U. S.] A man: used frequently in the intensive phrases — **a bad egg**, a worthless fellow, and **a hard boiled egg**, a ruffian or man of bad character or brutal disposition.

**egg-bread**. [U. S.] Bread made of corn-meal to which eggs have been added to serve as a binder.

The table was spread with rich *egg-bread*, fried ham, and pure coffee

*Southern Hist Soc Papers* XII 26.

**egg on**. To instigate or incite; urge.

Schemers and flatterers would *egg him on*

THACKERAY *Esmond* II x 207

**eggs for money? Will you take**. Will you allow yourself to be bullied or swindled?

*Leontes* Mine honest friend *Will you take eggs for money?*

*Mamullus* No, my lord, I'll fight

SHAKESPEARE *Winter's Tale* act i, sc 2.

**Egypt**. [U. S.] Southern Illinois, of which Cairo is the chief city.

The creed is pretty black in the northern end of Illinois, about the centre it is a pretty good mulatto, and it is almost white when you get down into *Egypt*

MR DOUGLAS of Illinois, in the United States Senate, Feb 29, 1860

**eighteen carat lie**. [U. S.] An unequivocal lie; a downright untruth; a barefaced falsehood.

**elbow** is used idiomatically in the following phrases, etc. **at one's elbow**:

Close at hand, convenient — **elbow-crooker**. A person addicted to inordinate drinking, a lushier. Hence, the phrase, **to crook the elbow**. To drink as by bending the elbow in conveying a glass or bottle containing liquor from a table or counter to the lips — **more power to your elbow**. A polite form of salutation which originated in Ireland — **out at elbows** — Having holes in the elbows of one's coat, shabbily dressed, seedy; hence, near the end of one's resources.

He was himself just now so terribly *out at elbows* that he could not command a hundred pounds

MRS SHERWOOD *Lady of the Manor* II vi 244

**rub or touch elbows**. To be intimately associated with — **shake the elbow**. To play African golf, gamble with dice from shaking the dice-box — **up to the elbows**. Deeply involved or engaged

**elbow-grease**. Strength in or prolonged exertion of the arms: applied to doing hard work.

Forethought is the *elbow grease* which a poet—or novelist, or dramatist—requires

TROLLOPE *Thackeray* 122

**elbow-room**. Room for the free use or movement of the elbows; figuratively, scope for activity or occupation.

Give faith scope, give it *elbow-room* in which to work

BROOKS *Works* VI, 331.

**El Dorado**. Any region rich in gold, such as that sought for in the New World by the Spanish conquerors and early explorers; also, any region or any enterprise that abounds in opportunities for the acquisition of wealth: used figuratively for any source of abundance: as, an *El Dorado* of wit or wisdom. The State of California was so called after the finding of gold there in 1848. FUNK & WAGNALL'S *New Standard Dictionary*.

'Shadow,' said he, 'Where can it be—

This land of *Eldorado?*'

POPE *Eldorado* st. 3.

**elegant.** [U. S.] Dainty; fastidious; excellent; capital: a word convenient in its manifold perverted meanings. Apparently derived from the Irish. See quotation from Charles Lever.

The good folks (in Kentucky) have *elegant* hogs, and *elegant* bacon, *elegant* corn, *elegant* whisky, *elegant* land, and *elegant* tobacco,—we have a man on board who is said to be an *elegant* oarsman, and another who is “an *elegant* hand with an axe.”

HALL *Letters from the West*.

I haven't the janus for work,  
For 'twas never the gift of the Bradys;  
But I'd make a most *elegant* Turk  
For I'm fond of tobacco and ladies

CHARLES LEVER.

**elephant, to see or show the.** To see or show life or the notable sights, especially of a great city.

Just like the Americans, when they are going to see a great sight, say they are going to see the elephant.

BESANT AND RICE *Ready-Money Mortiboy* XXXIV.

To have seen the elephants is equivalent to having seen all that there is that is worth seeing—**white elephant.** A dignity or possession that is costly to maintain, anything burdensome to support in allusion to the sacred white elephants formerly presented by the King of Siam to those members of his court that he wished to ruin.

**elevated.** I. *a.* Exhilarated by alcohol; slightly tipsy.

The liquor mounted up to our heads, and made us all extremely frolicsome. I, in particular, was much *elevated*.

SMOLETT *Roderick Random* XVII.

II. *n.* [U. S.] An overhead railway.

**eleventh hour, at the.** At the last moment; just in time.

Rescued by the interference, *at the eleventh hour*, of a French partisan of the Indians.

IRVING *Washington* vol. 1 376.

**embalmed beef.** Beef that has been pickled, as in boracic acid, and canned for preservation: an army term, originating during the Spanish American War (1898), and applied to supplies furnished by the commissariat.

**embusqué.** [F.] Ambushed: used contemptuously during the World War to characterize one who by influence was assigned to military service outside of the zone of fire.

*Embusqué* . . means one who through cowardice or selfishness, plus influence, stays at home.

GELETT BURGESS in *Century Magazine* Sept., 1916.

**encumbrance.** [Brit.] A child

**end** is used in the following idiomatic phrases—**not to care which end goes forward.** To be reckless or negligent

Slowly, easily, gently, softly, negligently, as *caring not what end goes forward*.

WIGHAL'S *Dictionary* (1608), p. 86.

—**on end.** Erect, formerly also, without intermission, consecutively

A great hotel in Paris is a street set *on end* WASHINGTON IRVING *Wolfert's Roost*.

The ministerial prints raved for two months *on end* BYRON *Works* 552 1.

—**to be all on end.** To be angry, irritated, to be all on edge, also, to be expectant.

—**to end in smoke.** To be destroyed, to come to nothing, as plans, etc —**to keep one's end up.** To do one's fair share, to pay one's portion of the expenses, as of an entertainment, also, to keep things going —**to make ends or both ends meet.** To

live inside one's income, to keep out of debt

**end-men.** In Negro minstrelsy, the men who sit at the ends of the front line of performers, and have an important share in the play of words with the interlocutor.

**enemy** is used idiomatically for “time” in the following phrases: **how goes the enemy?** What time is it?

“How goes the enemy, Snobb?” asked Sir Mulberry Hawk “Four minutes gone”

DICKENS *Nicholas Nickleby* XIX.

—to kill the enemy. [Brit.] To kill time  
The swell who is bored by his efforts to *kill the enemy*

*The Glasgow Citizen*, Nov. 19, 1864

**enemy** occurs in the following—**enemy alien**. A naturalized citizen of foreign birth who, when war is declared with the land of his birth, repudiates his allegiance to the land of his adoption and supports the land of his birth—**public enemy**. An enemy with which a country is at open war, including marauders, pirates, raiders, etc.

**English** is used in the following phrases to designate idiomatic or correct speech as, **the king's or queen's English**. Pure or correct English—to clip or murder the king's or queen's English. To speak or write ungrammatically

Hearse a stammerer taken clipping the *King's English*, and the constable hath brought him to you to be examin'd  
*Look About You* 1600.

**Enoch Arden, an.** One who returns after a long absence during which he has been given up as dead by his friends. From *Enoch Arden*, the hero of a poem of the same name by Tennyson.

**enough is as good as a feast**. Where there is sufficiency there is no need for excess: a proverb in many languages rendered in the French, "On est assez riche quand on a le nécessaire."—One's wealth is ample when one has the needful.

**enow**. Enough in Samuel Johnson's time considered as the plural of *enough*.

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough

A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread and Thou

Beside me singing in the wilderness—

Oh, wilderness were paradise *enow!*

FITZGERALD transl. of *Rubayyat of Omar Khayyam* st. 12

**en route**. [F.] On the road or way.

**entire**. [Eng.] 1. Porter: from the fact that in brewing it was formerly made by combining ale, beer, and two-penny: now an advertising term. Formerly called **entire beer**. 2. The ale, beer, and porter of one brewery, as sold to a tied house; as Barclay & Perkins's *entire*.

**equal to the occasion**. Adequately qualified or equipped; able to cope with conditions; also, measuring up to the standard, as of the times **era of good feeling**. [U. S.] The period covering the administration of President Monroe.

Monroe's Administration, "the era of good feeling," was not a period of complete peace in the politics of New York City The tax-payers began to stir

*The Evening Post*, New York, Nov. 1, 1909

**errand, to send a baby on an**. To court failure in advance, as by assigning an infant to do a man's job.

**escadrille**. [F.] A squadron of military airplanes. The smallest group formation In the French military service, the personnel of a division of the flying corps, including aviators, mechanics, and their apparatus together with six airplanes and accessories, and fuel sufficient to keep them in active service

**esprit de corps**. [F.] A spirit of common devotedness, sympathy, or support among the members of an association or a body; comradeship.

*Esprit de corps* . . . in every specialized part of the body-politic, prompts measures to preserve the integrity of that part in opposition to other parts

H. SPENCER *Studies in Sociol.* X. 242.

**Essex lion**. [Brit.] A calf: in derision of one's courage.

**ethyl alcohol**. Whisky: a euphemism of United States Navy. Murray says it "may be considered as water" in which one atom of hydrogen is replaced by an atom of ethyl, or C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>; thus C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH instead of H.OH."

The Surgeon General of the Navy issued an order forbidding the use, save under the most drastic restrictions, of distilled spirits, wines or alcoholic preparations. "Whisky is stricken from the supply table of the medical department," in the wording or the order. For extreme cases of necessity, *ethyl alcohol* will be employed instead of whisky.

*American Legion Weekly*, Sept. 24, 1920.

**Eurasian.** A person of mixed Indian and European descent. Suggested as preferable to half-caste, but discarded in favor of *Anglo-Indian* by the European and Anglo-Indian Defence Association.

No name has yet been found which correctly represents this section. *Eurasian* certainly does not.

*Proceedings of the Imperial Anglo-Indian Assn* in *The Pioneer Mail*, April 13, 1900.

**even** occurs in a number of terms in which its meaning is either "level," "equable," "equal," "impartial," etc. as **even-handed**. Treating all alike, impartial, as, *even-handed* justice — **evenly even**. Divisible by four; opposed to **unevenly even** or *oddly even*, divisible by two but not by four — **even-minded**. Characterized by equanimity — **even or odd**. An old game of chance — **even page**. The verso or left-hand page of a printed book, which is marked with an even number — **even-tempered**. Having an equable or placid temper — **of even date**. Of the same date. — **on an even keel**. Smoothly from a sea phrase applied to a ship when it *hast* he same draft of water forward as aft — **on even ground**. On equal terms — **to be or get even with**. To retaliate upon or pay back in kind — **unevenly even**. See EVENLY EVEN.

**ever and anon.** Now and then; at one time and at another; repeatedly. And *ever and anon*, with rosy red  
The bashful blood her snowy cheeks did dye

SPENSER *Faerie Queene*. II, ix, 41.

**every bit or whit.** In all respects; altogether, wholly; quite.

The primæval earth will be *every whit* as ill-shaped as that we poor mortals inhabit  
S PARKER *Philos. Essays* 12.

**every now and again or then, every once in a while.** At frequent intervals; from time to time; occasionally; frequently; repeatedly.

*Every now and again* the ear could catch the sudden splash of pike meeting pike.  
P ROBINSON *Fisher of Fancy* 90.

**everything is lovely and the goose hangs high.** [U. S.] Everything goes swimmingly; all's well — an allusion to the hanging of a goose for a GANDER PULLING.

**evidence, in.** Received in a case as legal and competent proof; perfectly plain; apparent.

The Broad Church School was more *in evidence* than at any previous Congress.  
*The Church Times* Dec. 28, 1888.

**evil eye.** A malignant influence, according to ancient and still prevalent superstition, radiating from the eyes, the possessor of which may be innocent of any evil intent. In Southern Europe, the Levant, and elsewhere, amulets are worn as a protection against it.

Have you ever been held under the spell of the light that lies in woman's eyes?  
Has the *evil eye* ever gazed at you? The writer knows of a man who believed himself to be slowly dying as a result of having been gazed upon by a beautiful woman possessed of the malignant power of fascination

*The New York Herald* Sept. 11, 1921.

**evil one.** Satan.

Deliver us from the *evil one*

Matthew vi, 13 [R. V.]

**ewe lamb.** One's only treasure, pet or special favorite: from the following Biblical allusion.

But the poor man had nothing, save one little *ewe lamb*, which he had bought and nourished up . . . and was like unto him as a daughter II Samuel xii, 3.

**ex cathedra.** [L.] From the chair; with authority; dogmatic.

Old Botherby's sporting, *ex cathedra* tone

BYRON *Blues* 1. 150

**exception, to take.** To take offense, object.

Some of the more haughty of the aristocracy *did take exception* at his neglecting to take off his cap to them

PRESCOTT *Philip II* iv, 60

**execution, to do.** Effective work; said especially of warlike operations.

An adder when she doth unroll

To do some fatal execution

SHAKESPEARE *Titus Andronicus*, act ii, sc. 3

Sophia's features were not so striking at first, but often *did* more certain execution

GOLDSMITH *Vicar of Wakefield*

**Exeter Hall.** A building in the Strand, London, erected in 1830-1831, used for religious, philanthropic, political, and musical assemblies and for a time it was symbolic of religion and temperance. The building, purchased for the Young Men's Christian Association in 1880, was pulled down and the Strand Palace Hotel built on its site in 1907.

Thither (to Africa) Manchester turns her longing eye, thither the heart of *Exeter Hall*, is yearning

GRANT ALLEN in *Contemporary Review*, 1888

**ex officio.** [L.] By virtue of or because of office or position; as, the mayor is *ex officio* chairman; he can do this *ex officio*; officially.

The Proctors are *ex officio* members of each of the under-mentioned committees

*Oxford University Calendar*, 1888

**ex parte.** [L.] In the interest of one party only; emanating from one side only.

**expense, at another's.** By the detraction or the disparagement of another, at some one else's cost.

The lovers of Hampden cannot forbear to extol him at *Falkland's expense*

MATTHEW ARNOLD *Mixed Essays* 251

**experience religion.** [U. S.] Feel convicted of sin, and be repentant; be converted, rejoice in the strength of one's salvation.

Some went so far as to doubt if she had ever *experienced religion*, for all she was a professor

O. W. HOLMES *Guardian Angel* XII

**eye** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases; as, **all in one's eye:** Imaginary

—**black eye.** An eye having the adjacent surface discolored by a blow or bruise

—**by the eye.** In great quantity — **eye agate.** A precious stone formed of circular

concentric layers, giving, when sliced, an eye-like appearance — **eye-bait.** Whale-

bait — **eye-balm.** A plant, the golden-seal or orange-root — **eye-beam.** A quick

look or glance of the eye — **eye-copy, eye-draft.** A copy made without any mechanical

aid to the eye — **eye-memory.** Recollection of the visual appearance of things —

**eye of a bridge.** [Ir.] The span of a bridge — **eye of day.** [Poet.] The sun. Also

called **eye of heaven: eye of the morning: eye of a storm.** An area of clear sky

at the center of a cyclone — **eye-opener.** Anything that opens the eyes, actually or

figuratively (1) An incredible tale or piece of news (2) Something enabling one to

comprehend what was before a mystery or unheeded. (3) [U. S.] A drink of liquor,

especially one taken early in the morning — **eye-trap.** That which ensnares through

the eye — **eye-water.** A wash for the eyes — **eye-wise.** 1. Seeing little except by the

bodily eyes, lacking insight or mental vision 2. Wise as appearance goes — **half an**

**eye.** A hasty glance

I saw with *half an eye* that all was over STEVENSON *Treasure Island* IV, xviii, p. 139.

—**in the twinkling of an eye.** Immediately — **in the wind's eye.** Directly

opposed to the point from which the wind blows; hence, direct opposition, face, as, to

**sail in the eye of the wind.** To follow a course directly opposed to (another)

—**my eye!** An expression of astonishment or asseveration

"My eyes! how green!" exclaimed the young gentleman DICKENS *Oliver Twist* VIII

—**the eyes of a ship.** The foremost part of the bow so called from the ancient

practice of painting a large eye on each side of a vessel's cutwater as an emblem to

avert the evil eye — **the mind's eye.** Mental view or perception — **to cast sheep's**

**eyes at.** See under **SHEEP** — **to have in one's eye.** To intend or purpose — **to have**

or keep an eye on. To watch, to look after or observe carefully — **to keep the eyes clean, skinned or peeled.** [U S] To have one's eyes wide open, to be watchful; alert — **to lay or set eyes on.** To see — **to make eyes at.** To look fondly at, ogle — **to see between the eyes.** To clap the eyes on, to look at — **up to the eyes.** Deeply immersed or occupied

The stewards were *up to their eyes* packing baskets and making preparations

GORDON STABLES in *Boy's Own Paper*, Nov. 16, 1889.

Used also in the phrase **mortgaged up to the eyes**, meaning "to the utmost limit"

A neighbour's estate, *mortgaged up to the eyes*, was sold under the hammer

READE *Born to Good Luck.*

## F

**fabric fund or lands.** [Eng.] A fund established or lands given to maintain or restore a church or cathedral.

**face** is used in various senses in the following idiomatic phrases: **face to face.** So as to confront, in close relation sometimes, in an attitude of opposition.

We possess an intuitive or *face-to-face* knowledge of certain properties of matter.

MASSON *Record Brit Philos* IV, 319.

—**in the face of.** 1. In the presence of, confronting 2. In opposition to; in defiance of, in spite of — **to face about.** To turn the face in the opposite direction from that previously faced to reverse one's position or stand — **to face it out.** To keep a bold front under all circumstances — **to face one out.** Same as TO FACE ONE DOWN

They do all they can to *face me out* of my wits

SHAKESPEARE *Twelfth Night*, act IV, sc. 2.

—**to face one down.** To abash or repel one by a bold or fixed gaze or by audacity, as in denial or assertion — **to face the music.** To meet difficulties courageously; to make the best of adverse conditions

Instead of *facing the music* the Whig Coons thought it best to make as few tracks as possible

*The Richmond Enquirer*, July 27, 1880.

—**to face with.** To bring up before; confront with — **to fly in the face of.** 1. To oppose unreasonably and violently, rashly set at defiance 2. To avoid, as by flight, flee — **to lose face.** To lose standing or reputation, suffer loss of self-respect.

—**to make faces.** To put on a distorted or grotesque expression; grimace

*Making* what children call "a face" by screwing up her mouth and nose

G. M. FENN *Double Knot*, I, i, 71.

—**to make or pull a face.** To affect dismay or disapproval Sometimes used in combination with the words *crooked*, *pitiful*, *wry*, etc — **to put on a good or bold face.** To present a strong front, as in the face of opposition or adversity, to be courageous and unflinching in trouble or difficulties

Dundas had little or rather nothing to say in defence of his own consistency; but he *put a bold face* on the matter, and opposed the motion

MACAULAY *Hist of Eng.*

—**to run on one's face.** To obtain goods, credit, etc., on the strength of one's personal appearance, manner, etc — **to save one's (his) face.** To retire, under some pretext, from negotiations that have proved or are likely to prove unsatisfactory, in such a manner as to protect one's dignity — **to set one's face against.** To set one's personal influence, opinion, or will against — **to travel on or push one's face** To live on credit

I must *travel on my face* after this

*Knickerbocker Mag*, XLVIII, 504.

There are three ways of getting into debt first, by *pushing a face*

GOLDSMITH *Essays*, VIII.

**facile princeps.** [L.] Easily first or foremost; the acknowledged expert.

The special line that Sir W. Harcourt has undertaken is political tergiversation, and in that he is *facile princeps*, and has left all competitors behind

MARQUIS OF SALISBURY *Speeches*, 1887.

**facings, to put through one's.** To investigate one's attitude so as to ascertain if appearances are real or superficial.

The Greek books were again had out, and Grace . . . was put through her facings  
TROLLOPE *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, I, xli, 356.

**facsimile.** An exact copy: used of reproductions in the phrase, in **facsimile**, meaning in such a manner as to be in every particular an exact reproduction, copy, or representation. In a loose sense, an etype, model or counterpart

**fact** is used in several idiomatic phrases as, **in point of fact**, often contracted to **in fact**. 1. In truth, in reality 2. In short. used in summarizing, as, she was a gossip, a scandal-monger, and a common scold—in **fact**, she was a public nuisance—**matter of fact**. A subject belonging to the realm of fact as distinguished from the domain of theory, but often used loosely to imply "the truth concerning the subject under discussion"

**fag-end.** The part left over as the untwisted end of a rope or frayed end of a piece of cloth, hence, the end or last of anything: used in contempt.

It is not my purpose to give an Englishman's ideas of the United States . . . at the *fag end* of a volume TROLLOPE *West Indies*, ch 23, 380

The first fruits to the devil, the *fag-end*, when faculty for good and evil is gone, to God BERKELEY *Skeleton Sermon*, 6, Works, IV, 640

**fair (a.)** is used idiomatically in the following: **a fair field and no favor.** An even chance for everyone—**fair and softly.** With courtesy, evenly; easily; gently, quietly, without haste or violence

He returned *fair and softly* RABELAIS, I, XXIII. URQUHART'S trans.  
The proverb is old and true, "*fair and softly* goeth far"

—**fair and square.** In a straight-forward way; honestly  
You are *fair and square* in all your dealings TOPRELL *Four-footed Beasts*, 210

—**fair-conditioned.** Kindly disposed, good-natured—**fair-faced.** 1. Fair to one's face 2. Two-faced, given to double-dealing, treacherous—**fair game.** Fit for criticism, subject or open to attack WYCHERLEY *Gentleman Dancing Master*, Epilog

In that character it becomes *fair game* for ridicule BENTHAM *Chrestomathia* 396.  
—**fair maid of February.** A flower the snowdrop—**fair maid of France.** One of several flowers, as the crowfoot or ragged-robin—**fair-minded.** Open-minded, free from bias, open to reason, honest—**fair play.** Fairness in playing, contending, debating, etc., a fair or just opportunity.—**fair prospect, way or road.** A good chance of success, favorable conditions

A *fair prospect* of reaching their destination MACAULAY *Hist Eng*, II, 551.  
—**fair-told.** Well said, interestingly told—**for fair.** [U S] Without question, decidedly—the **fair sex.** Womankind—to **lead fair.** To guide aright

**fair (n.)** is used idiomatically in the phrases **the day after the fair.** See under DAY—**fancy fair.** A special exhibition of fancy articles for sale, as for a charitable purpose

**fairy-tale.** 1. A fanciful story; an absurd incredible tale; a false statement; an untruth. 2. A folk-tale about fairies.

**faith** is used idiomatically in the following: **faith-cure:** The cure of disease by prayer with faith in its efficacy—**faith-curer.** One who practises faith-cure, a **faith-healer** or **faith-doctor.**—**by my faith.** On my honor—in **faith.** In very truth—in **good faith.** In honor, with sincere intentions, in very truth, really.

In *good faith*, we have no poor kindred now SMOLLETT *Don Quixote*, trans., 107.  
*Good faith, good faith*, the saying did not hold

**faithful, the.** Believers; also, supporters, as of a political party. SHAKESPEARE *Richard III*, act ii, sc. 4.

**faith-mark.** The characteristic principle of a religion.

**faith-state.** A condition of religious exaltation or spiritual uplift.

**fake.** [U. S.] 1. Anything prepared or prearranged for the purpose of deceiving; especially, fictitious or manufactured news printed in a newspaper; hence, any swindle or trick, or the person conducting it.



Both ladies then came to the conclusion that the fortune-teller was a *fake*, and they decided to notify the police. *The New York Mercury*, 1888.

2. Any worthless, spurious, or worn-out property; hence, one of the odds and ends or worthless trinkets, etc., sold by a street pedler.

**faker.** 1. A street merchant, as of gewgaws. 2. One who exaggerates colors or dresses news for the press, a deceiver. 3. An artist who defies convention for the sake of advertisement, also, a photographer who touches up negatives to produce desired results. 4. A poseur. 5. In early Victorian English slang, a thief.

(1) I've turned *faker* of dolls and dolls' furniture

*The Daily Telegraph*, London, Aug. 1, 1885.

(2) *Faking* in newspaper fraze meanz the supplying ov unimportant detailz which may serv an excellent purpos in the embellishment ov a dispatch

*Phonetic Journal*, Jan. 7, 1888.

(3) Nine pictures out of ten in modern galleries are simply studies *faked up*.

*London Spectator* Jan. 24, 1885.

**fall** is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **the fall of man.** In theology, the change by which the race passed from a state of innocence to a sinful condition when Adam and Eve voluntarily disobeyed the divine command thereby introducing original sin—**the fall of the leaf.** The time when leaves fall or the powers of man decay, the autumn of life—**to fall.** To enter into some state, as of mind or body, condition, course, occupation, etc.

Poor old gentleman, after enough feats . . . he *fell* melancholy, *fell* imbecile, blind, soon after middle life. *CARLYLE Frederick the Great* I, p. 175.

—**to fall about one's ears.** To tumble into a mass or a confused heap around one. —**to fall afoul or foul of.** 1. To collide with, as a vessel. 2. Hence, to attack or assail violently; also, to quarrel or squabble with.

You *fall foul* upon our miracles and our saints. *LANDOR Imag. Conn.*, Wks. I, 116.

—**to fall away.** 1. To renounce or depart from one's allegiance, faith, or duty.

I am surprised that you should have *fallen away* from that allegiance.

*DOYLE Micah Clarke*, xxxiii.

2. To become lean or emaciated; languish, fade, faint, die.

Till bones and flesh and sinews *fall away*.

*SHAKESPEARE I Henry VI*, act iii, sc. 1.

—**to fall back on or upon.** To draw on one's resources or powers—**to fall behind.** To be in arrears (with), lose ground—**to fall down.** To fail in or give up, as an undertaking, drop—**to fall flat.** To fail to excite interest, attract purchasers, or produce the intended effect or result—**to fall for.** [U. S.] To be attracted by; accept on appearances—**to fall from.** To withdraw from, desert—**to fall in.**

1. To sink, bend, or tumble inward.

Part after part [of the roof] continuing *to fall in*.

*GOLDSMITH Vicar of Wakefield*, xxii.

2. To take a place or position among or in line with others, especially a proper or assigned place.

"*Fall in, fall in* there lads!" resounded along the line.

*LEVER Charles O'Malley*, CXV.

3. To terminate; lapse, as an annuity or a lease. 4. To become available or operative, as a legacy.

—**to fall in love.** To become enamored of.

If Jupiter had not loved his sister Juno, he might, Polydectus, have *fallen in love* with your Juno. *MARTIAL Epigrams*, X, ep. 89.

—**to fall into one's hands.** To come into one's possession or control—**to fall in with.** 1. To meet accidentally, come into the company or vicinity of, light upon.

2. To concur in or agree to, favor; conform or yield to.

After he once *fell in with* Mistress Shore. *SHAKESPEARE Richard III*, act iii, sc. 5.

—**to fall off.** 1. To drop or be thrown from a support. 2. To withdraw or become estranged, desert; decrease or cease, apostatize. 3. To diminish or decrease, as in quantity, quality, or value. 4. [Naut.] To deviate or swerve to leeward of the former course.

- (1) The mask of universal philanthropy has *fallen off*. *Pic Nic*, No. 1.  
(2) When you had consented to his offer, if he *fell off*, you would call him a cheat. *STEELE Tattler*, 247.  
(3) Were I always grave, half my readers would *fall off* from me *ADDISON Spectator*, No. 179.

The publishers tell him the sales are *falling off*. *MACAULAY Life & Lett*, I, 304.

- (4) Starboard not to give fire until he *fell off*. *STURMY Mariner's Mag*, I, 20.  
—to *fall on*. 1. To find by chance, meet with. 2. To attack, assail. 3. To begin immediately. 4. To descend on—to *fall on one's feet or legs*. To come advantageously out of a predicament, in allusion to the cat's nimbleness of always falling on its feet.

Mr King . . . was put in a good humor by *falling on his feet*, as it were, in such agreeable company. *WARNER Their Pilgrimage* 6.

- to *fall out*. 1. To happen; befall, result. 2. To have a difference, quarrel. 3. *Mul*. To drop out of the ranks.

- (1) The death of this great mathematician *fell out* in the Year of Rome 542.

*LANGHORNE Plutarch*, I, 344.

- (2) So this good woman *fell out* with her neighbors. *THACKERAY Virginian*, IV.

- (3) Some of the men were obliged to *fall out* from fatigue.

*The Standard*, London, Aug. 7, 1890.

- to *fall over*. 1. To hasten, as in an effort to please, as, he *fell over* himself to satisfy her whim. 2. To withdraw from, pull out, secede—to *fall short*. To be or prove deficient, fail to meet the standard.

The workmen should on no occasion *fall short* of the common wages of the country.

*SMEATON Edystone Light*, 103.

- to *fall through*. To come to nothing, fail—to *fall to*. To come or drop into position, shut, to begin especially said of eating.

We *fall to* upon these dainties.

*DICKENS American Notes*, II.

I have seen our curé and the minister *fall to* with fists on questions of faith.

*PARKMAN Champlain*, III, 223.

- to *fall to the ground*. To come to nothing, to be discredited or futile.

His great hopes *fell to the ground*.

*M. J. GUEST Lect Eng Hist*, XXXIV.

- to *fall upon*. Same as TO *FALL ON*—to *take a fall out of*. To get the advantage of, hence, to embarrass—to *try a fall*. To have a wrestling-bout, hence, to make a test of relative strength or superiority.

You shall *try* but *one fall*.

*SHAKESPEARE As You Like It*, act 1, sc. 2.

**familiar spirit.** One's invisible attendant agent; specifically, a spirit or demon supposed to be summoned by a soothsayer from the unseen world to attend upon him.

**family, a man or woman of.** A man or woman of noble or gentle descent; a well-born person; an aristocrat.

Three troops, each consisting of 200 men, who are all *men of family*.

*DALRYMPLE Trav in Sp & Port*, IX.

He married a beautiful English *woman of family*.

*H. WALPOLE Vertue's Anecd Paint*, III, 32.

**fan, n.** [U. S.] An enthusiast over baseball, football, or some other sport a rooter: a contraction of *fanatic*.

The information of the average *fan* as to how the gate money is divided between the clubs is misty.

*The Bookkeeper*, May, 1909.

**fan, v.** 1. [Police Cant, U. S.] To club (one). 2. *Baseball*. To cause (the batter) to strike out, by deceptive pitching. 3. [Slang, U. S.] To beat; whip; maul; also, to feel; frisk. 4. To expand fanwise; hence [U. S.], to make a display.

**fancy** is used idiomatically in the following: **fancy ball.** A dance at which those who participate appear in masquerade costumes—**fancy bred.** Reared to suit one's caprice—**fancy cloth.** Woven goods that are richly embroidered or ornamented in gay colors.—**fancy dress.** A masquerade costume,—**fancy-fed**,

Sustained by one's imaginations—**fancy-free**. Untouched by the tender passion  
In maiden meditation, *fancy free*

SHAKESPEARE *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, act ii, sc. 1.  
—**fancy goods**. [U S.] Small wares and ornamental fabrics or choice articles in  
general in the dry-goods trade, ribbons, silks, laces, etc., in the druggists' and allied  
trades, toilet articles, ornamental leather goods, etc., in the grocery trade, Italian  
wares, fine liquors, selected fruits, etc.—**fancy-monger**. One given to indulging  
his whims—**fancy-sick**. Love-sick; morbidly given to caprice—**fancy stocks**.  
Securities whose prices depend on the dealers who operate in them—**fancy-wood**.  
Any wood used in cabinet-work—**fancy-work**. Embroidery—**the fancy**. Voraries  
of a special art, sport, or amusement. Specif. The sporting world, especially the  
prize-ring, animal-fanciers collectively, especially dog-fanciers.

Mr. William Ramm known to the *Fancy* as the Tuthury Pet

THACKERAY *Book of Snobs*, XIV.

A great book sale had congregated all the *fancy*

DEQUINCEY *Bentley*, Works VI, 53. Note.

—to tickle one's fancy. To excite pleasure in one.

**far** is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, **by far**: In a great degree.

—**far and away**. Altogether beyond, quite, completely used to emphasize super-  
iority in comparisons, as, *far and away* the best, or to qualify characteristics.

You are *far an away* the greatest scoundrel I ever saw.

W. E. NORRIS *Thirby Hall*, XXXIV.

—**far and near**, **far and wide**. Spread over a wide territory or great distance.

—**far away**. 1. Abstracted, inattentive; absent-minded, as, a *far-away* look. 2.

Remote or distant, as in relationship, as, a *far-away* aunt—**far between**. Infrequent;

rare, as, gifts that are few and *far between*—**far cry**. A long way from the Scottish

proverb "It's a *far cry* to Loch Awe," in allusion to Kilchurn Castle, the stronghold

of the Campbells on Loch Awe. See Scott's "Rob Roy," ch. XLIV—**far-fetched**.

Overdrawn; also, remotely connected—**far from it**. By no means, not at all,

with reference to condition, likeness, effect on the feelings, etc., as, "Is he rich? *Far*

*from it*"—**far-gone**. In an advanced stage, deeply affected, almost overcome, as

with drink or love.

You are already *far gone* in your love. JOWETT *Plato*, I, 46.

Both very tipsy one so *far gone* that she could not walk straight

—**far other**. Altogether different—**far-reaching**. Producing effects that are

wide in influence—**far-seeing**. Capable of estimating the results of present action

or conduct.—**from far**. From a remote place—I'll be *far* or *further* if I do. I

will not do so now more commonly, I'll see you *further first*—**so far as**. To the

extent that often used with *in*—**so far forth**. To such a degree

**farce-comedy**. A farcical comedy: applied chiefly to a form of enter-

tainment in which topical songs, jokes, dances, acrobatic feats, etc.,

are strung on a very slender dramatic thread.

**farming, dry**. Farming where there is but little precipitation and

irrigation can not be practised.—**intensive farming**. Farming in

which every foot of ground available is utilized.

**farthest, at the**. At the greatest distance or space; making the largest

allowance of time.

Let it be so hasted that supper be readie *at the farthest* by five of the clocke.

SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice*, act ii, sc. 2.

**fashion, after a or in a**. In some way; to some degree, somehow; not

too well.

Providence . . . has made me a lady *after a fashion*. TROLLOPE *He Knew*, XVI.

Work which I can do *after a fashion*

G. McDONALD *Annals of a Quiet Neighborhood*, I, 5.

**fashion-monger**. One who affects scrupulous attention to fashion; an

exquisite, a dandy—**fashion morality**. A system of rules for conduct composed

on the basis of new and exotic examples, as distinguished from traditional morality.

—**in or out of fashion**. In conformity or at variance with the prevailing mode,

**fast.** Given to dissipation; also, in Great Britain, hard up; embarrassed, in a tight place.

She knew he could not afford to gamble and keep *fast company* night after night.

G R SIMS *Three Brass Balls*, Pledge XI

**fast and loose.** Inconstant; uncertain; an old game so called, played with a looped strap; hence, **to play fast and loose**, to be tricky or untrustworthy.

The English Queen . . . had . . . almost distracted the Province by her *fast and loose* policy.

MOTLEY *Dutch Republic*, VI, iii.

**fat-head.** A doltish thick-headed or stupid person; any one whose opinion regarding matters of art, religion, morals, politics, or prohibition, differ from those of the person using the phrase.

**father, to.** To charge the begetting of or responsibility for. Sometimes rendered **to father on** or **upon**.

*Fathering* his riots on his youth

*Yorkshire Tragedy*, I, iii.

The principle on which such a doctrine might be *justly fathered*

FLETCHER *Fict and Gen Creed*, Pref Wks., III, 313.

**Father of Water.** 1. The Mississippi river: from the Algonkian *Missi Sepe* "Great Water." 2. The river Nile.

Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor in whose dominions the *Father of Waters* begins his course.

SAMUEL JOHNSON *Rasselas*.

**fat is in the fire.** The mischievous step has been taken and must produce its result.

I hear nothing of the armes, ammunition or provisions, without all which all the *fat is in the fire*

ORMONDE-LETTER in CARLE'S *Life*, III, 281.

**fat of the land.** The richest and best the land affords, luxury; the most desirable part.

For thirteen years he has lived on the *fat of the land*

TROLLOPE *Three Clerks*, XIV.

**fatted calf, to kill the.** To prepare a feast of the best, in allusion to the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

Go, let the *fatted calf* be killed

COWLEY *Mistress*, *The Welcome*

**fault** is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **at a fault**. Not as it should be.

If your master's chamber be *at a fault*, see yonder where stands a gibbet

COPLEY *Wits, Futs and Fancies*.

**—at fault.** 1. In the wrong. 2. Deserving of blame 3. Off the scent, as dogs when hunting 4. Hence, at a loss, in a quandary

(1) One's conscience being *at fault*, an appeal to the law must settle the matter.

Ht MARTINEAU *Loom and Luggie*, I, v, 87.

**—in fault.** Blameworthy, culpable **—to a fault.** To the point of its being blameworthy; exceedingly; excessive, as, generous to a fault.

**—to find fault with.** To discover or make known something blameworthy.

If nothing is ever to be *found fault with*, nothing will ever be mended

BENTHAM *Frag Government Wks.*, I, 230.

**—with all faults.** With all defects, without guaranteeing freedom from faults: a commercial phrase **—without fault.** Without fail, sure

**faux pas.** [F.] A false step; mistake; error, slip; especially, a breach of good breeding or of good morals.

Before this *faux pas*, this trip of mine, the world could not talk of me.

WYCHERLEY *Plain Dealer*, act v, sc. 1.

His Lordship . . . conceived that his daughter had made a *faux pas*

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends*, Act *New Play*.

**favor, n.** Look; countenance; features.

But there's no goodness in thy face  
tidings.

. . . so tart a *favor* to trumpet such good  
SHAKESPEARE *Antony and Cleopatra*, act II, sc. 5.

**favor, v.** To resemble in countenance or appearance.

This young Lord Chamont *favours* my mother . . . does he not?

BEN JONSON *Cave is Alter'd*, act iii, sc. 1.

**favor, by or with one's.** By or with one's permission.—**out of favor.** Not enjoying one's good will; not in one's good books.

**favorite son.** [U. S.] A politician popular in his own State but little known elsewhere: in allusion to the praise accorded to Washington and other early patriots.

The Great and Illustrious Washington, the *favorite son* of liberty, and deliverer of his country, entered upon the execution of the office of First Magistrate of the United States of America.

*The Daily Gazette*, New York, May 1, 1789

A *favorite son* . . . may not be, like the Dark Horse, little known to the nation at large, but he has not fixed its eye, nor filled its ear.

BRYCE *American Commonwealth*, I, 552.

**feast, in the sense of an annual celebration, occurs in the following:—**

**feast of asses.** A medieval festival similar to the feast of fools, in which an ass played a prominent part—**feast of cups (Choes).** The central phase of the spring festival (*Antheseria*) in ancient Greece, in which the wife of the king archon was symbolically married to Dionysos—**feast of fools.** A festival, observed January 1, perhaps perpetuating the pagan Saturnalia, and characterized by scandalous burlesque abandoned since the Reformation—**feast of lanterns.** A Buddhist and Japanese festival held on the first full moon of the year, characterized by extensive lantern illuminations—**feast of lots.** The feast of Purim—**feast of pots.** An offering of cooked grain in pots (*chytroi*) to Heceres, as god of the underworld, at the Greek festival of the *Antheseria*—**feast of roses.** 1. A Persian festival when the roses are in full bloom. 2. A French rural festival observed June 8, when a young girl called *La Rose* is rewarded for meritorious conduct and bedecked with the flowers—**feast of reason and flow of soul.** An entertainment where conversation is the piece de resistance

There St John mingles with my friendly bowl,

The *feast of reason and the flow of soul*

POPE *Satires and Epistles*, bk ii, sat. 1, l 128.

**feather** is used idiomatically in the following terms—a **feather in one's cap.** An achievement to be proud of, a thing to one's credit. In earlier days the feather was a mark of honor or distinction, but a feather in the cap was also the insignia of the court fool or jester.

Yankee Doodle came to town,

Riding on a pony,

Stuck a feather in his cap,

And called it macaroni.

Yankee Doodle,

Their favour in an author's cap's a feather.

BYRON *Don Juan*, I, cxix.

—**featherbrain, featherhead.** A weak-minded, light-headed person, a shallow or frivolous individual—**feather-heeled.** Frolicsome—**feather-weight.** 1. In boxing and wrestling, one who is of the lightest weight and distinguished from *middle-weight* and *heavy-weight*. 2. One who is not normally developed mentally, a light-weight—**in fine or full feather.** In complete plumage, not molting, hence, in good trim, in one's best attire, or in funds.

I saw him in full clerical feather

THACKERAY *Newcomes*, II, 34

Never was Mr Rigsby in finer feather than at Court Royal

BARING-GOULD.

—**in high feather.** In high spirits.

In summer days of highest feather

THOMAS HARDY *Return of the Native*, I, 10

—**to cut a feather.** To appear in fine clothes, make a brave showing, cut a dash.

—**to feather one's nest.** To provide well for one's future, fairly or unfairly.

His spouse was disposed to feather her own nest at the expence of him and his heirs.

SMOLLETT *Count Fathom*, 41.

—**to show the white feather.** To prove cowardly; back down; turn back: in allusion to cock-fighting

No one will defend him who shows the white feather. SCOTT *Journal*, April 15, 1819.

**Federal City, the.** Washington, the national capital of the United States.

Situated upon the banks of the Potomac, there are already two towns, both in the vicinity of the *Federal City*. WELD *Travels through North America*, 40

**Federalist or Fed.** [U. S. Pol.] A member of the party which drew its inspiration from Alexander Hamilton, and opposed that which upheld the theories of Thomas Jefferson; hence, a remote ancestor of the Republican Party.

**Federals.** [U. S.] A name applied to the troops of the North as distinguished from *Confederates*, the troops of the South during the Civil War.

**fed up with.** [Brit.] Surfeited: a phrase dating from the Boer War, meaning to have had too much of and be oppressed by the excess.

"Oh, I'm about *fed up with it*," is the current slang of the camps when officers and men speak of the war *The Daily Telegraph*, London, Oct. 20, 1900.

**feed the fishes.** To be seasick; also, to be drowned

Although I fed myself shortly before arriving abreast of Eddystone, I *fed the fish* shortly afterwards *Home Tidings*, Nov. 22, 1884, p. 398.

**feed the press.** 1. In British journalistic cant, send up copy slip by slip; in American newspaper-offices, to "rush the copy in short takes."

2. [U. S.] To adjust, as paper or card, to a press so that it may receive the impress of the form.

**feed, to be off one's.** To have no appetite: a term borrowed from the stable by the dining room.

I won't take a rasher this morning, thank you; nor yet any pigeon-pie. I'm rather off my feed JAMES PAYN *Grape from a Thorn*, LIII.

**fee-fo-fum, or fe-fi-fo-fum.** Nonsense words put in the mouth of a giant in the nursery tale of *Jack the Giant-killer*; hence, a giant or hobgoblin; any mysterious jargon or mummerly to awe the foolish or ignorant.

His word was still *fee, foe, and fumme*,  
I smell the blood of an English man

The Spirits of Milton . . . have no horns, no tails, none of the *fee-faw-fum* of Tasso and Klopstock SHAKESPEARE *Lear*, act iii, sc. 4.

MACAULAY *Essays*, Milton p. 8.

**feel** is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **to feel after.** To try to

find, as a person groping in the dark, search for, as they were *feeling after* God blindly.

**—to feel bad.** To suffer from illness, also, to be troubled mentally about **—to feel for.** 1. To endeavor to find by feeling about, hence, to advance cautiously in trying to locate, as, we *felt for* the enemy in the forest. 2. To sympathize with. **—to feel (it) in one's bones.** To have a premonition that something is about to happen.

**—to feel like.** [U. S.] To feel inclined, or to wish to do a thing

I *feel like* taking men and women by the hair of their heads, figuratively speaking, and like crying, stop, before you ruin yourselves BRIGHAM YOUNG, March 2, 1856.

**—to feel of.** To handle, test with the touch **—to feel one's legs.** To become confident, gain self-assurance **—to feel one's oats.** To be fresh or mettlesome, as a horse, hence, to show conceit or self-importance, to act bumpuously **—to feel one's way.** To advance cautiously, to be circumspect

**feet, at one's.** On the ground before one, indicating submission; or the relation of pupil to teacher, disciple to master, lover to mistress.

The royal bear ward lodged a formal complaint at the *feet* of her majesty

SCOTT *Drama*, 203.

The lessons that he had learnt at the *feet* of Mazarin.

Bookman, October, 1895

**feet of clay.** The earthly or baser part of human nature: from Biblical usage. (*Daniel* ii, 33.).

**Fell, I do not love thee, Doctor.** I do not like you but have no special reason for disliking you: a phrase used to indicate a feeling of aversion toward a person.

Dr John Fell (1625-1686) was Dean of Christ Church College Oxford, in which office he threatened to expel Tom Brown (1663-1704), the author of "Dialogues of the Dead," for his irregular habits, but on receiving a letter of submission from him, Dr Fell promised him forgiveness if he would translate Martial's 33rd Epigram.

Non amo te Sabadi,  
Nec possum dicere quare,  
Hoc tantum possum dicere,  
Non amo te

[Brown rendered this (as most commonly cited)·

*I do not love thee, Dr Fell*  
The reason why I can not tell;  
But this alone I know full well,  
*I do not love thee, Dr Fell*

This was either an adaptation of Rowland Watkyns (1660):

I love him not,  
But show no reason can  
Wherefore, but this,  
I do not love the man

or a paraphrase of Thomas Forde's lines from "Virtus Rediviva or a Panegyrick on the late King Charles I," p. 106

"I do not like thee, Nell," etc.

**fellow, no end of a.** An agreeable, pleasant, and genial companion.

**fellowship, to.** [U. S. Colloq.] To associate with on the basis of church membership; hence, **to dis-fellowship**, to expel from an organization.

He never *fellowshipped* with any of our churches *Christian Life*, May 1, 1886

**feminine, the eternal.** Woman; also, the feminine element in the scheme of human nature.

The *eternal feminine* with singing moods. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, June 16, 1892

**fence, to be, ride or sit on the.** [U. S.] To be undetermined or neutral; to wait to see how the cat will jump; be undecided.

A kind o' hangin' round and settin' on the fence

Till Providence pointed how to jump an' save the most expense.

LOWELL *Byglow Papers*, II, 97.

"Well, Mr. Potter," said I, "I suppose you are an out and out rebel" "You bet I am," replied that worthy "And me too," said Mr. Opdyke, "though day before yesterday *I was on the fence*" ADMIRAL PORTER *Incidents of the Civil War*, 83.

**fences, to mend one's.** [U. S.] To adjust matters in local politics to one's satisfaction.

**fence the tables, to.** In Scottish churches, to make a solemn address to those sitting at the communion-tables, warning the unworthy not to partake.

**ferret among or out.** To solve a mystery by searching diligently; dig out. He has *ferreted among* the pawnbrokers for scraps of finery.

I have *ferreted out* evidence, got up cases.

E. GOSSE *Gossip in Library*, XII, 150.

DICKENS *Bleak House*, IX.

**fetch.** To please, to excite interest or attention.

This will *fetch* 'em and make them haste toward their getting more

JONSON *Alchemist*, 11.

Hamlet's soliloquy, you know; the most celebrated thing in Shakespeare Ah, it's sublime, sublime! Always *fetches* the house

MARK TWAIN *Huckleberry Finn*, XXI, 205.

*Fetch* is used also in a number of phrases as, **to fetch about.** 1. To use a circuitous method. 2. To bring about, contrive.—**to fetch and carry.** To perform menial

duties, as a trained dog, be a drudge—to **fetch a walk**. To go and take a walk.  
Mr. Warrington . . . was gone to *fetch a walk* in the moonlight

THACKERAY *The Virginians*, vol 1, p 364.  
—to **fetch down**. 1. To cause to fall, bring down, as in gunning 2. To make lower, as a price—to **fetch in**. 1. To put within, or in the midst of, include 2. To take in, deceive—to **fetch off**. 1. To get the upper hand of, overreach 2. To save, rescue 3. To drink off, swallow—to **fetch out**. To make apparent or conspicuous, develop, as, to *fetch out* the beauty of a gem by polishing—to **fetch up**. 1. To rear or bring up, as children 2. To bring or come to a sudden stop or halt. 3. To recover, as lost time or ground 4. To overtake, as in a race 5. To bring up in memory, find—to **fetch up all standing**. To stop suddenly and unexpectedly.

**fetching**. Pleasing; attractive, alluring; fascinating; as, a pretty figure in a *fetching* bathing costume; a *fetching* bonnet.

**few, a**. Somewhat; a good deal; much, considerably; as “quite a few,” “just a few.”

Your letter, which diverted him not a *few*

SUSAN BURNER's letter in *Mme D'Arblay's Diary*.  
If we carry our scalp out, we may be thankful a *few*. *Harper's Weekly*, June 7, 1862.

**few, the**. The minority, as distinguished from the many or the majority.  
The progress of opinion from the *few* to the many is slow and painful

NICOLAY AND HAY *Lincoln*, vol x, p 345 [c co 1890].

**F. F. V.** [U. S.] The “First Families of Virginia.”

The man who, in the old world, would be dubbed a viscount or a baron, was known in the Old Dominion as an *F. F. V.* RAE *Westward by Rail*, 311.

Mr. Floyd, as everybody knows, is an *F. F. V.*, and the soul of honor accordingly.  
*Harper's Weekly*, April 11, 1857.

**fiddle** is used idiomatically in the following phrases: **as fit as a fiddle**:  
In perfect condition, in good health

I arrived at my destination feeling as *fit as a fiddle*

H. O'REILLY *Fifty Years on Trail*, 11.

—to **play first fiddle**. To be a leader or a principal person, as in a coterie or in an enterprise

He was of the opinion that Prussia should never *play the first fiddle* in the affairs of Europe  
O'MEARA *Napoleon in Exile*, 1, 227.

—to **play second fiddle**. To take or hold a subordinate place

It was evident that . . . he had been *playing* . . . *second fiddle*.

H. KINGSLEY *Ravenshoe*, III, ix, 140.

**fiddle-de-dee**. Nonsense! also, used as a noun, a piece of nonsense.

All he (Johnson) said was, “*fiddle-de-dee* my dear”

BOSWELL's *Life of Johnson*, Appendix, 837.

**fiddler's fare**. Meat, drink, and money.—**fiddlers' green**. A place for fiddling, dancing, frolicking, etc.—**fiddlers' green**. A land free from the care of the world originally a sailors' term

It is believed that tailors and musicians after death are confined in a place called *Fiddlers' Green*

MAXWELL *Capt Blake*, I, xv.

The pilotless narrows which lead to *Fiddlers' Green*, where all good sailors go  
J. D. J. KELLY in *Harper's Mag*, Aug, 1883.

—**fiddler's news**. Stale news carried about by itinerant fiddlers.

**fiddlesticks**. 1. Nonsense! an exclamation of depreciation. 2. *sing*. A trifle; an insignificant or nonsensical thing.

Wounded? A *fiddle-stick's* end, said the doctor. STEVENSON *Treasure Island*, I, ii, 16.

**field** is used in the following idiomatic phrases:—**field day**. 1. A day of great activity and excitement, as the day when troops are taken to the field for exercise and evolutions 2. A college holiday devoted to athletic sports 3. A day of outdoor scientific exploration—**field of attention**. The total number of objects recognized or made clear by the direction and grasp of attention—**field of audition**. The range of space over which sounds are audible—**field of consciousness**. The total number of objects, recognized at one time, and so said to be together in consciousness.—**field of inattention**. The range of consciousness that is marked by



'momentary obscurity of perception or apprehension — **field of the Cloth of Gold**. The spot between Andres and Gunes, now in Pas-de-Calais department, France where Henry VIII. of England met Francis I. of France, June 7-25, 1520; so called from the pageant held on the occasion of this meeting — **field of vision**. The area which can be covered by vision when both head and eyes are fixed — **in or of the field**. Belonging to a sphere of action or place of contest, either literally or figuratively; especially, a battle-ground

I bade her good-day and left Captain Bellwood in possession of the field

B. L. FARJEON *Three Times T.*

— **to keep the field**. To hold one's ground against all opposers, to continue active operations

The forces of the Commonwealth *keeping the field* no longer

HOBBS *Leviathan*, II, xxix.

— **to take the field**. To begin a campaign, open hostilities

The greatest mathematicians of the age *took the field* BREWSTER *Newton*, II, xiv.

**Fifteenth Amendment.** [U. S. Pol.] See **FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT**.

**fifty-fifty.** [U. S. Colloq.] Half and half; evenly divided; shared equally; also, on an even basis; share and share alike.

"We can have no *fifty-fifty* allegiance in this country. Either a man is an American and nothing else, or he is not an American at all

THEODORE ROOSEVELT *Foes of Our Own Household*

**fifty-four forty or fight.** [U. S. Pol.] The north latitude of the Territory of Oregon claimed by the United States against Great Britain, as acquired from France by purchase April 30, 1803. Used as the slogan of the war-party in the Presidential election of James K. Polk in 1844.

During the same session war with England regarding the Oregon question seemed imminent. The United States claimed that the line of 54° 40' north latitude was [the northern boundary of the ceded territory], while Great Britain maintained that it followed the Columbia river. The Democratic convention of 1844 had demanded the reoccupation of the whole of Oregon up to 50° 40' with or without war with England

Appleton's *Cyclopædia of American Biography*, v, p. 53.

**fig for him, a.** [Colloq.] The worth of a fig, or any unimportant or trifling thing; the least bit or amount.

A *fig* for medical advice! The judge will never need it.

HAWTHORNE *House of Seven Gables*, XVIII, 308.

We have it from Nature, and so a *fig* for Miss Edgeworth. THACKERAY *Catherine*, VII. — **not to care a fig.** To be absolutely indifferent to — **to give the fig.** To thrust the thumb into the mouth as a sign of contempt or in derision, bite the thumb at

**fig** is used idiomatically in the following: **to fight for one's own hand:**

To contend or strive for one's own benefit or gain

In opposition you will recover vigour and freedom; you will *fight for your own hand*.

*The Mistletoe Bough*, 1885.

— **to fight it out on this line.** To adopt a course of action and continue it to the end: a phrase used by General U. S. Grant during the American Civil War.

Arguing in favor of leaving the proposed income tax amendment as it *sands*, and *fighting it out on that line*, the Springfield *Republican* says

The New York *Evening Post*, May 9, 1910.

— **to fight shy.** To avoid an opponent or an issue, keep out of sight or reach.

I have had to *fight shy* of invitations that would exhaust time and spirits

WASHINGTON IRVING *Life & Letters*, II, 44.

— **to fight the tiger.** To play against the bank at faro. Also rendered to **buck the tiger**.

In the United States, the operation of staking one's money in a gambling hell is called "*Fighting the Tiger*"

RAE *Westward by Rail*, 244.

**fighting chance.** An opportunity or possibility of gaining a thing by bold action, conflict or struggle.

**fighting-cock, to feel like a.** To feel equal to one's tasks; feel in fine fettle.

**figure out.** To ascertain or determine by calculation, solve, as a problem.

**figure up.** To compute the amount of; add up; reckon.

**figure, to cut or make a fine or sorry.** To be much in evidence: used both favorably and unfavorably.

Like the Persians, they make a splendid *figure* every where but at home.

Witnesses of this kind *cut but a sorry figure* in the hands of skillful counsel

GOLDSMITH *Citizen*, 5.  
SERGEANT BALLENTINE *Esper*, I, 456.

**filbert-mouse.** The dormouse: from its habit of feeding on filberts.

**filbert-nail.** A finger-nail having the contour or outline of a filbert; regarded as a sign of beauty.

**filibuster.** [U. S. Pol.] 1. Originally, a free-booter or marauder, especially an adventurer who stirred up revolutions in Latin-American States in order to profit by gun-running and other illegal traffic.

It is reported that General Henningsen and General Walker have met at Savannah; and it is privately understood that a new *filibuster* expedition against Nicaragua is on foot

*Harper's Weekly*, Aug. 22, 1857.

2. A strategic move in Congress or other deliberative body, to delay or prevent the passage of a bill or the transaction of business.

Mr. Bland did not oppose these measures in a *filibustering* spirit

*Missouri Republican*, Feb. 22, 1888.

**fill the bill.** To supply the needs of the occasion, come up to expectations; attract, as a theatrical star whose name is billed to the exclusion of all others: describe appropriately.

"Affable Imbecile" would about *fill the bill* for you

*The Chicago Tribune*, 1882.

**find** is used idiomatically in the following — **to find itself.** To become settled into accurate working order — **to find one's account in a thing.** To prove an undertaking worth the while — **to find oneself.** 1. To support oneself, said of a servant or employee. 2. To arrive at a state or reach a condition in which one can use one's abilities to the best advantage — **to find one's legs.** To stand up; arise.

— **to find out.** To learn, discover, as, she *found out* what he meant at last

**fine** is used in the following idiomatic phrases. — **fine as a fiddle, or as silk.**

In very good condition, enjoying perfect health

He replied to my inquiries concerning his health, that he was as *fine as silk*, but not half so much beliked by the ladies

*Pharaziana*, 208.

— **fine feathers make fine birds.** Dress makes the man: a translation of the French proverb "la belle plume fait le bel oiseau" — **fine-ladyism.** Over nicety of manner; affectation of fashionable graces and display, as on the part of a woman — **fine words**

**butten no parsnips.** Flowery speech supplies no food, words count for little unless supported by material help — **in fine.** In conclusion

We have, *in fine*, attained the power of going fast

RUSKIN *Seven Lamps*, VII, 195.

— **to sail fine.** [Naut.] To sail as close to the wind as possible — **to train fine.** In athletics, to reduce the weight of flesh to the last degree consistent with health and strength.

**fine-cut.** [U. S.] Chewing tobacco, slightly flavored in the manufacturing process, and cut into long filaments: popular before the days of plug.

**finger** is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **ear-finger.** The little finger or pinkie — **his fingers are all thumbs.** He handles things awkwardly — **index-finger.** The first finger because it is most frequently used in pointing out anything — **in one's fingers.** Under one's control — **medical finger.** The ring finger

At last he put on her *medial finger* a pretty, handsome gold ring, whereinto was enclosed a precious toadstone of Beausse.

RABELAIS *Pantagruel*, III, 17.

—my little finger tells me. I have a premonition that (something will happen).  
—ring finger. The third finger used by the Romans from the belief that a nerve ran through it to the heart *Brewer*. It was termed the *medical finger* because of its use in mixing drugs and the superstition that nothing could harm it without immediate action on the heart taking place —to arrive at, or gnaw; to live by, or suck out of one's finger-ends. To suffer the extremes of poverty, to achieve by industry or manual labor

Thousands . . . live singular well by their *finger-ends*

*BURTON Anatomy of Melancholy, Dem to his Reader.*  
*HEYWOOD Proverbs, 11*

I suck not this out of my own *finger-ends*.  
—to burn one's fingers. To suffer from meddling in something or lose money in an investment that promised great returns but proved unprofitable —to give one the finger. To disappoint one after holding out hopes that his desires would be fulfilled, turn a cold shoulder to one —to have a finger in the pie. To have a share in whatever is going forward, take part in an affair or business

Susie liked to have a *finger in every pie* *MISS TYTLER Susie's Diamonds, XII*  
—to have at one's finger-ends, or tips. To be perfectly familiar with, to know by heart, so that use or repetition is easy, as she had Chopin at her *finger-tips*

Names which a man of his learning has at his *finger-ends*

*STEELE Spectator, No 156*

—to lay a finger upon. To find readily, indicate precisely —to let slip through one's fingers. 1. To lose an opportunity 2. To allow to escape 3. To let go of one's hold —to put a finger in one's eye. [Ir] To outwit by guile, get the advantage of by subterfuge —to put a finger upon. To meddle with —to stir a finger. To make least effort

I would not stir a finger in assertion of alleged rights

*MILLER Schools and Schoolmasters, 338.*

—to twist or turn around with one's little finger. To have complete control of, make tractable, subject to one's whims —with a wet finger. With great ease. I hate brawls with my heart, and can turn over a volume of wrongs with a *wet finger*.

*GEORGE HARVEY Pierce's Supererogation, p 21.*

FLORES Canst thou bring me thither?

PEASANT With a wet finger

*Wisdom of Dr Dodypoll (1600).*

The phrase is said to have originated from the wetting of the forefinger and thumb with saliva by cotton-spinners when spinning —with one's finger in one's mouth. Inactive and helpless, hence, stupid, foolish

To stand with our fingers in our mouths *CROMWELL Letters, Nov 14, 1649.*

He returned to Ireland with his finger in his mouth

*The Spectator, London, Mar 28, 1874.*

**finger-plate.** A plate on a door, usually placed near the handle, to protect the door from finger-marks.

**finger-post.** A post bearing guide-boards indicating the way, as at a cross-road, often with pointing hands.

Meaning to be a guide, you were only a *finger-post*, which points the way to others, but stands still itself.

*DINAH M CRAIK Sermons Out of Church, p 80.*

**finger-print.** An impression of the inner surface of the last joint of a thumb or finger, which, on account of its varying lines in every individual is valuable for the identification of criminals —to finger-print. To take the impression of one's fingers, as at police headquarters See FINGER-PRINT

**Finsbury.** A corruption of *fen's bury*, the town in the fens. See quotations.

In 1498 certain grounds . . . on the north side of Chiswell street, and called Bunhillfields, within the manor of Finsbury, converted into a large field now known by the name of the Artillery ground *ESTICK Hist of London, i, 441*

The names of *Finsbury*, Moorfields, Moor Lane, and Moorgate Street, hand down the memory of the great Fen or Moor . . . which protected the northern side of London.

*TAYLOR and PALMER Words and Places, p 193*

**fippence.** Fivepence.—**fippenny bit.** Fivepence: a Spanish or Mexican silver piece worth  $6\frac{1}{4}$  cents, current in the United States before the Civil War. formerly

so called in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and some Southern states withdrawn from circulation in 1857

**fire.** To dismiss from service; discharge; eject or bounce. Often spoken of as an Americanism, but in reality old English, which took on a new popularity in America, and again became current in England.

The truth I shall not know, but live in doubt,  
Till my bad angel *fire* my good one out

SHAKESPEARE *Passionate Pilgrim*, l 28.

—**fire away.** Relieve your mind of what you wish to say, go ahead —**fire eater.** 1. A bully, a blow-hard, a braggadocio in earlier usage, a duellist 2. A soldier in the Confederate service

He is a regular *fire-eater*, can hit the ace of hearts nine times out of ten at fifteen paces PAULING *American Comedies*, 205.

The new-comer proved to be, as he pleasantly acknowledged, a Southern *fire-eater* HAWTHORNE *Our Old Home*, i, 55.

—**like a house on fire.** Quickly and easily —**to fire up.** 1. To start a fire in a furnace

In the depth of winter, it is quite enough to *fire-up* twice in twenty-four hours

BARING-GOULD *Germany*, II, 368.

2. To light one's pipe 3. To burst into a rage.

She *fired up* at the arrogance of the squire

WASHINGTON IRVING *Tales of a Traveller*, i, 261.

—**to set the Hudson, North River or the Thames on fire.** To do something strikingly sensational, brilliant used most frequently in an ironical sense with a negative

**first-chop.** Of the first class or quality; first-rate: from the official stamps (called *chop*) used in Indian and Chinese trade; as, tea of the *first chop* is superior to *second-chop* tea.

They are a sort of *second chop* dandies

THACKERAY *Book of Snobs*, xxix

**first-foot.** [North Britain] The first person who crosses the threshold after midnight on New Year's Eve.

The person so doing must on no account enter empty handed. The entrant, to be lucky, must be of the male sex. If he have a squint, he brings bad luck. If he be of dark complexion, he is not a desirable comer. The luckiest is a fair-haired *first foot*

R O HESLOP *Glossary of Northumberland*.

Twelve o'clock announces the new year, when people are ready at their neighbor's houses with hot-pints and buttered cakes, eagerly waiting to be *first-foot*

On the admission of the *first-foot* depends the prosperity or trouble of the year

CROMEK *Nithsdale Song*, p 46.

At midnight *first-footing* begins, and it is considered very lucky if your first visitor should be a dark-haired man

WILLIAM BLACK in *Harper's Magazine*, Dec., 1883, p 63.

**first-nighter.** One who frequents first performances at a theater or opera house.

The *first-nighter* is almost unknown in the colonies J SUTHERLAND *Australia*, 125.

**first run, or shot.** [U. S.] The first spirit distilled by modern grain-alcohol process: composed largely of fusel-oil, and once used as a liniment in treating rheumatism.

**first to fight.** The United States Marines: so called, during the World War, from their slogan.

The Marines have been advertised Their slogan, "*First to Fight*," has drawn thousands of the best men of the nation

VINCENT FITZPATRICK in *Baltimore Sun*, Oct 27, 1918.

**fiscal lands.** Lands reserved, among the Franks, to supply funds for the use of the crown.

**fiscal year.** The financial year of a national treasury or of a business, at the end of which the accounts are balanced. In the United States the fiscal year ends on June 30, in England and Germany on March 31, and in France on December 31.

**fish** is used in many idiomatic phrases; as, **the age of fishes**, in geology, the Devonian period—the fourth period of the Paleozoic era—all is **fish that comes to my net**. Nothing that comes my way is amiss, everything is turned to profit that falls into my hands—a **loose-fish**. A disolute person, one of dissipated habits

The lady, who was a *loose fish*, became acquainted with him

*The Examiner*, London, 1831.

—**a nice or pretty kettle of fish.** Awkward situation, quandary, a perplexing or puzzling state of affairs, a muddle. See also quotation from Scott

A Tweedside *kettle* is after the fashion of an up-river pie-me, but it has its own peculiar characteristics. Scott in *St. Roman's Well*, ch. xii, says, "A *kettle of fish* is a fête champêtre of a particular kind."

A large caldron is boiled by the side of a salmon river, containing a quantity of water, thickened with salt to the consistency of brine. In this the fish is plunged when taken, and eaten by the company *fronde super verde*—on the green leaves."

—**drunk as a fish.** Excessively drunk: an idiotism—**dull as a fish.** Sluggish and slow—**fish-day.** A day on which fish is eaten to the exclusion of meat, a fast-day or day of abstinence—**fishes of St. Patrick.** Flesh meat plunged or boiled in water and dressed for food on St. Patrick's Day which falls in Lent.

*Slingsby Papers* quoted by WRIGHT, *Eng Dial Duet*—**fish for.** To seek by means of art or skill for some advantage favor or profit: used in many combinations, as **to fish for oneself**, **to fish for compliments.**

The first woman who *fishes for him* hooks him.

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair*, iv.

This raised the price of the clergy, and taught them to *fish for themselves*.

N. BACON *Discourse on Uniformity of Government*, I, iii, 8

He has been *fishing for compliments*, and compliments have risen to the hook

GOULBURN *Personal Religion*, 193

—**fish-story.** An exaggerated or incredible tale, highly improbable yarn, a cock and bull story. For a good example, see JEROME K. JEROME *Three Men in a Boat*, vii, 246

Exaggerations are often termed *fish-stories*, for the reason perhaps that improbable tales are related concerning the denizens of the sea. C. F. HOLDER *Luring Lights*, 97

In consequence of the shoals of white fish which occupied and choked the channel between Bois Blanc Island and Amhurstburgh, the steamboat could not pass

*The St. Louis Enquirer*, Dec 8, 1823

—**like a fish out of water.** Out of one's element, helpless, restless because unoccupied

The Arabians out of their deserts are as *fishes out of the water*

PURCHAS *Pilgrimage*, VI, xii, 636.

—**mute as a fish.** Silent, speechless

You're as *mute as a fish*

CAPTAIN MARRYAT *Poor Jack*, xi.

—**neither fish, flesh, nor fowl nor good red-herring.** To be neither one thing nor the other, impossible of classification

Damned neutrals, in their middle way of steering,

Are *neither fish, nor flesh, nor good red herring*

DRYDEN *Duke of Guse*, Epilogue, 40.

—**odd, queer, cool fish, etc.** A quaint, peculiar, or an unpudent person

He was an *odd fish*

FRANKLIN *Autobiog.*, Wks i, 137.

The *queerest, coolest fish* in Rugby

HUGHES *Tom Brown*, i, 19.

—**the best fish smell when they are three days old.** The heartiest of welcomes can be overstayed, do not wear out your welcome—to **fish in troubled waters.** To interfere in a quarrel in the hope of securing personal advantage—to **have other fish to fry.** To have other matters that require attention, to be unable to attend to the subject submitted

I've got other things in hand . . . I've *got other fish to fry*

MRS. OLIPHANT *Poor Gentleman*, xlv

—**to make fish of one and flesh (or fowl) of another.** To be partial, make an invidious distinction

This is *making fish of one and fowl of another* with a vengeance

*Manchester Examiner*, May 21, 1885.

**fit** is used in the following idiomatic phrases:—**by fits**, or **by fits and**

**starts**. Spasmodically, irregularly.

Breaking into song *by fits*

TENNYSON *In Memoriam*, XXIII.

No particular State, acting *by fits and starts*, can harass the trade of France, Holland,

etc

T. JEFFERSON *Corr.*, Wks 1, 426

—**fit as a fiddle**. See under **FIDDLE** —**nine-day fits**. A form of lockjaw, an affection of children occurring within two weeks after their birth and lasting nine days — **it is fit**. It is opportune or convenient — **to be fit**. To be in fine or good physical condition, healthy originally a sporting use — **to fit like a glove**. To fit perfectly — **to fit one's palate**. To be relished by, suit one's taste — **to fit out**. To supply the necessary equipment for, as, *to fit out a ship* or an expedition, also, to provide the necessary clothing for one — **to fit to a T**. To fit exactly, in allusion to the square used by draughtsmen

You see they'd have *fitted him to a T*

BOSWELL *Life of Johnson*.

—**to fit to, or into**. To bring into harmony, adjust, modify so as to conform

I return here enclosed the sonnet . . . rendered into Spanish and *fitted to* the same Ayr it had in English

HOWELL *Letters*, IV, xiv, 19.

—**to fit up**. To provide with what is necessary, as, *to fit up a house* for one's residence — **to give one fits**. [U S] To rebuke or berate one soundly

**fitted to, to be**. To suit in every respect; as, it was a perfect match, bride and groom *were fitted to* each other

How exquisitely the individual man and the external world are *fitted to* each other.

H REED *Lectures on English Literature*, 1, 36.

**five** occurs in the following idioms: **five-corners**. An Australian evergreen

shrub with red or green flowers, also, its peculiarly shaped fruit — **five-finger**. 1.

(1) Cinquefoil (2) Bird's-foot trefoil (3) Oxlip 2. A starfish with five arms —

**fiveleaf**. Cinquefoil — **five-line**. A special summons issued to members of Parliament underscored with five lines — **Five Members**. The five English members

of Parliament (Pym, Hampden, Holles, Haselrig, and Strode) whose arrest was attempted by Charles I on Jan 4, 1642, under seven articles of impeachment of high

treason — **Five Nations**. In American history, five confederated tribes of Indians within the borders of what is now the State of New York, namely Mohawks, Oneidas,

Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas A sixth family (the Tuscaroras) returned from self-exile in 1721, and thus formed the famous *Six Nations*, who played an important

part in the early history of New York

**fix**, *v*. Meaning, originally to fasten or attach, *fix* is used in widely different senses in the United States, where they are chiefly idiomatic, as, to arrange, repair, cook, set right, settle, dress oneself, brush and arrange the hair or beard, prepare, shake down or replenish a fire, bribe, corrupt, stuff a ballot-box, stabilize a government, undress, lay the table cloth, set a table, dress a wound, make tea, clean a gun or sword, obtain revenge, reparation or satisfaction, or mix a drink, decide definitely, determine, settle.

Everything is *fixed* except the meaning of the word itself The farmer *fixes* his fences, the mechanic his work bench, the seamstress her sewing-machine, the fine lady her hair, and the schoolboy his books The minister has to *fix* his sermon, the lawyer to *fix* his brief Dickens was requested to *unfix* his straps, *catables* are *fixed* for a meal, a girl *unfixes* herself to go to bed, and *fixes* herself to go for a walk At a public meeting it is *fixed* who are to be the candidates for office, rules are *fixed* to govern an institution, and when the arrangements are made the people contentedly say, "Now everything is *fixed* nicely" FARMER AND HENLEY *Slang and its Analogues*, II, 404.

It's the first time we ever took boarders, but we'll try to *fix* things nice

*Scribner's Magazine*, 1888.

I *fixed* my hat a little better on my head, and then advanced boldly into the tavern.

*The Philadelphia Aurora*, Sept 11, 1799.

Our meeting houses should be *fixed*

For men and women to be mixed *Massachusetts Spy*, Aug. 8, 1804.

She was always *fixed* in her best when she went to chapel

MRS. TROLLOPE *Manners of Americans*, 1, 296.

That *fixes* the tavern keepers and the tipplers.

C. MATHEWS *Writings*, 123.

You'll wait till he's had his wound *fixed*

*Yale Lit Mag*, IX, 116.

What business had your proof-reader to *fix* my Latin?

*Knickerbocker Magazine* XI, 277.

You call upon a gentleman in a country town, and his help informs you that he is *fixing* himself just now, but will be down directly, by which you are to understand that he is dressing. You inquire, on board a steamboat, of a fellow passenger, whether breakfast will be ready soon, and he tells you he should think so, for when he was just below they were *fixing* the tables, in other words, laying the cloth. You beg a porter to collect your luggage, and he entreats you not be to uneasy, for he will *fix* it presently and if you complain of indisposition, you are advised to have recourse to Doctor So and So, who will *fix* you in no time.

DICKENS *American Notes*, X,

How can surly virtue hope to *fix* a friend

JOHNSON *London*, 145.

The American plan of dividing authority makes it difficult to *fix* responsibility

BRYCE *American Commonwealth*, III, lxxvi, 151

'—in a *fix*' or in an awful or a regular *fix*. In a tight place or dilemma, predicament or difficulty

It can't be helped, you know. He ain't the only one in the same *fix*

DICKENS *Old Curiosity Shop*, LXI.

The Americans are never at a loss when they are in a *fix*

MARRYAT *American Diary*, Ser I, ii, 166.

—to *fix on*. To decide, select; determine on

That sweet creature is the man whom my father has *fixed on* for my husband

SHERIDAN *The Duenna*, act 1, sc 5

—to *fix one's flint*. To put one out of commission, settle or do for —to *fix out*. To spread out or display, also, to supply with, fit out, adorn —to *fix up*. 1. To repair 2. To make arrangements 3. To fit out —to *fix with the eye*. To attract the attention of

Marcella *fixed* him with her fine bright eyes

MRS MARY WARD *Marcella*, I, 142.

**fixings.** [U. S.] The things needed to prepare something, as trimmings, garnishments, dressing, etc.

**fixigig.** A restless, frivolous or silly girl.

A *Fixigig*, a flirt, a fickle . . . foolish female.

S. HOLLAND *Zara*, 140.

**fizzle.** [U. S.] A failure; fiasco; flash in the pan: in allusion to the hissing noise made by defective fireworks.

The speech was as complete a *fizzle* as ever disgraced Congress

*National Intelligencer*, Washington, Dec 8, 1851.

What promised at first to be a magnificent Parliamentary row ended in a mere unsensational *fizzle*

*The Echo*, London, March 16, 1890.

**flabbergast.** To stagger or astound.

They will be not a little *flabbergasted* to discover the meaning or wit of some of these elegant phrases

*Punch*, I, 261.

**flag of distress.** [Brit.] A card announcing "lodgings to let": hence, any indication of straitened circumstances.

**flam.** [Brit.] 1. Gammon; flattery; nonsense; humbug.

They must have known his Lordship better and not have ventured such *flams* at him.

ROGER NORTH *Lives of the Norths*, 368.

2. A delusion; an untruth.

**flame.** One who is beloved; a sweetheart; hence, an old flame, an old or former sweetheart. 2. The phosphorent gleam of a school of fishes seen at night.

Her heart remained faithful to her old flame, the doctor

THACKERAY *Paris Sketch-book*, 237.

—**flamed flower.** A flower whose center is highly colored —to **flame up**, forth, or out. To burst into sudden flame; become violently excited, hence, to display marked activity.

**flank.** [U. S. Army Slang.] To capture; appropriate; annex; plunder; also, to dodge, and to evade duty.

They would lead the horses out, take the greenbacks from the prisoners, and when near home, would *flank* out, with a horse and never come up.

In the South at least . . . to *flank* the whole battle was a phrase expressive of superlative cunning and brilliant success  
CRAWFORD *Mosby and His Men*, 295  
DEVERE *Americanisms*, 286

**flannel cakes and flapjacks.** [U. S.] Pan or griddlecakes usually eaten with butter and molasses for breakfast.

A very delicate species of food, which I tasted then for the first time, called *flannel cakes*  
Tom Pepper, I, 112, 1847

Fritters are pancakes and pancakes are *flapjacks* (among the Yankees)  
Massachusetts Spy, Nov. 28, 1827.

**flannels, to get one's.** [Brit.] To win a place in the boats or on the cricket or football team of a public school.

**flap.** A giddy, romping, hoidenish girl; a woman or girl of loose or light character. Compare **FLAPPER**.

**flapdoodle.** Twaddle; nonsense, flattery; gammon; braggadocio.

"It is my opinion, Peter, that the gentleman has eaten no small quantity of *flapdoodle* in his life time." "What's that, O'Brien," replied I. "Why Peter, it's the stuff they feed fools on."  
MARRYAT *Peter Simple*, XXVIII

A speech, all full of tears and *flapdoodle* about it being a sore trial to him and his poor brother to lose the diseased [deceased]  
MARK TWAIN *Huck Finn*, XXV.

**flapper.** [Brit.] 1. A young and unsophisticated girl, a sub-deb; from a duckling or fledgeling wild duck. FARMER AND HENLEY *Slang and its Analogues* vol. iii, p. 6 (1893). 2. A very immoral young girl in her early "teens." J. R. WARE *Passing English of Victorian Era* p. 133.

Ware after characterizing this word as belonging to the lower class adds: "Said by some authorities to have a very disagreeable meaning."

3. A courtesan. 4. An under-petticoat. 5. The hand. 6. A very young partridge, also a young wild duck.

**flare up.** To blaze up suddenly; figuratively, to fly into a passion.

You *flare up* like a bull at the sight of a red flag  
MRS RIDDELL *Austen Friars*, IV.

**flash.** 1. [Brit.] (1) Showy, knowing, expert, wide-awake. (2) Cheap and tawdry vulgar; loud; as *flash* jewelry. 2. [Australia.] Swaggering or vainglorious. 3. [U. S.] An expert, a rare use.

Another philosopher, Seneca, has shown himself equally *flash* on the subject

The *flash* riders or horse-breakers, always called "broncho busters," can perform really marvellous feats  
MOORE *Tom Crib's Memorial*, 19  
CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER *Their Pilgrimage*, 157

—a *flash in the pan*. An abortive attempt or endeavor, an unsuccessful undertaking from an explosion of the powder in the pan of a flint-lock musket that fails to discharge the weapon — **flash-house**. [Brit.] A haunt of vagabonds, thieves and resort where stolen goods are sold

The lowest wretches that the company's crimps could pick up in the *flash-houses* of London  
MACAULAY *Essays*, Lord Clive.

—**flash language** Thieves' jargon — **flash-man**. 1. [Brit.] A rogue, thief, or the proprietor of a flash-house 2. [U. S.] One who lives well with no visible means of support in rare use — **flash notes**. Bank notes — **flash of lightning**. [Brit. slang.] A glass of gin or other undiluted spirit

The thunders of eloquence being hushed, *flashes of lightning*, or, as the vulgar say, "glasses of gin" gleamed about.  
BULWER-LYTTON *Paul Clifford*, 141.

—to *flash it about*, or to *cut a flash*. To make oneself conspicuous by extravagance, show off, also, to masquerade



He *flushed it about* a good deal for a long time, going from one place to another. Sometimes he was a lord, at others an earl. *Free Years Penal Servitude*, III, 220  
 —to **send a flash**. [U. S. Journalism] To send a brief news-message by wire or wireless. Such a message is usually followed by a bulletin giving details in condensed form, which may stand as the introduction to the "story," which follows, giving details.

**flashy**. 1. Tawdry, showy. 2. Coarse; vulgar.

As stones they were cheap and *flashy*

*Century Magazine* XXVI

Their lean and *flashy* songs

Grate on their scammel pipes of wretched straw

MILTON *Lycidas*, 123.

**flat**. One who can be deceived easily, a simpleton, gull.

Their only way of living was to trick, extort, or coax money out of flats

W. BESANT *Harper's Monthly*, Jan., 1892

**flat-broke**. [U. S.] Moneyless; strapped; utterly ruined.

**flat-footed**. [U. S.] Firmly, emphatically, without compromise.

His Herculean frame and bold, *flat-footed* way of saying things, had impressed his neighbors.

*Harper's Magazine*, Sept., 1858

**flat-house**. [U. S.] A house with floors fitted for housekeeping by one or more families.

**flat, on the**. On canvas or other flat surface as opposed to *in relief*: said of painting, etc.

**flat out**. [U. S.] Fail completely; fall flat, as through mismanagement.

**flats and sharps**. Weapons.

I have known many a pretty lad cut short in his first summer upon the road, because he was something hasty with his *flats and sharps*

SCOTT *Heart of Midlothian*, XXX.

**flea-bite**. A minute quantity, small amount, hence, something insignificant, as the bite of a flea.

The money was a mere *flea-bite*, a miserable fifty

SALA *Seven Sons*, I, VII, 169

—**flea in one's ear**. A warning, caution, sometimes, an irritating reply or rebuff  
 —to **send away with a flea in the ear**. To dismiss with a box on the ear or with a scolding

We, being stronger than they, *sent them away with a flea in their ear*

ARBUTHNOT *John Bull*, III, VI

**fleece**. To deprive entirely of one's means, as by swindling; cheat; rob of money or property.

He is now squeezed and *fleece*d by them on every pretense

SCOTT *Fortunes of Nigel*

He *fleece*d him out of every halfpenny he had

DINAH M. CRAIK *King Arthur*, p. 81

**Fleet marriage**. A clandestine marriage performed by a needy churchman (**Fleet parson**) in the **Fleet prison** (a debtor's prison in London, abolished in 1845) and duly recorded in the prison books. They were prohibited in 1753. The name is derived from the *Fleet*, a swift stream that flowed to the Thames nearby

*Fleet marriages* had become one of the strangest scandals of English life

LECKY *England in the 18th Century*, III

**Fleet-Streeter**. [Brit.] A muck-racking journalist of Fleet Street, London; one who caters to yellow journalism, or levies tribute from those with whom his occupation throws him; a newspaper shark.

**Fleet-Streese**. [Brit.] The vernacular of Fleet Street in the City of London, a region characterized by Farmer and Henley as "the estate of journalism, especially journalism of the baser sort"

A mixture of sesquipedalian and slang, of phrases worn threadbare and phrases sprung from the kennel, of bad grammar and worse manners, the like of which is impossible outside Fleet street, but which in Fleet street commands a price, and enables not a few to live

FARMER AND HENLEY *Slang and its Analogues*

**Flemish account.** [Brit.] An unsatisfactory or a short account; also, a remittance for an amount smaller than due or expected, in allusion to the varying rates of exchange in commercial transactions.

**Flemish beauty.** A variety of pear.

**Flemish giant.** A Belgian hare of slate-blue color.

**flesh** is used in several idiomatic phrases; as, **after the flesh:** According to carnal nature—**an arm of flesh.** Human help or aid—**black in the flesh.** Curried on both sides said of a skin so treated—**flesh and blood.** The human or carnal nature, children, progeny

There are certain things which *flesh and blood* cannot bear

DICKENS *Martin Chuzzlewit*, vii.

—**one flesh.** 1. One person 2. Closely united, as two persons in marriage

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be *one flesh* *Genesis* ii, 24.

—**one's own flesh and blood.** One's direct descendants, as sons and daughters; by extension, one's brothers and sisters—**proud flesh.** An excessive development of granulations resembling flesh in a healing sore or wound Hence, manifesting inordinate assumption, arrogance, or haughtiness

Don't be proud and turn up your nose

At poorer people in plainer clothes,

But learn, for the sake of your soul's repose

That all *proud flesh*, where'er it grows

Is liable to irritation

SAMUEL S COX

—**to be in the flesh.** To be alive —**to be neither fish, flesh, nor fowl.** See under **FISH** —**to go the way of all flesh.** To die —**to make the flesh creep.** To give one gooseflesh; cause cold shivers, frighten or horrify

**flesh-pots of Egypt.** [Biblical.] Material welfare or luxuries or sordid consideration, in allusion to *Exodus* XVI, 3.

The *flesh-pots* of the city administration had therefore greater attraction for him.

BRUCE *American Commonwealth*, III, lxxxviii

**Fletcherize.** To masticate (food) to the point of pulpefaction; from the theory of Horace Fletcher, an American writer who advocated the practise.

**flicker.** A bird, the golden-winged woodpecker, so called from its note **flicker, let her.** [U. S.] Let her go: probably from flicking a horse with a whip to start it.

**flier, flyer.** 1. Something that travels fast or at great speed, as a boat. a horse, an express train.

You saw her take a trial gallop the other morning and you must know she's a *flier*.

BRADDON *Henry Dunbar*, xxii.

2. An airplane; also, an airman or aviator. 3. A small investment or speculation in stocks; a gamble.

The temptation to take a *flyer* in the market. *New Princeton Review*, V, 328 (1888).

4. A boy who takes sheets as they come from a printing-press.

**flies on him, there are no.** He is alert and full of energy.

There ain't no *flies* on him signifies that he is not quiet long enough for moss to grow on his heels, that he is wide-awake

*Detroit Free Press*, Aug 25, 1888

**flight.** An excursion beyond ordinary bounds; a superlative effort, as a *flight* of fancy; a *flight* of genius.

—**flight of ideas.** A condition of the mind in which a succession of ideas follow one another but the mind can not concentrate on anyone of them —**to take flight.** To run away, skip; flee, escape

I am sick of this. I have been bored to-night. . . . Suppose we take *flight* for Cannes? *Good Words*, 1887.

**flighty.** Capricious; changeable; as, a *flighty* young miss.

**fimflam.** 1. [U. S.] To cheat, swindle, or deceive, as by trickery.

2. [Brit.] A sham; an idle story.

They with a courtly trick or a *fim-flam*,

Do nod at me, whilst I the noddy am

TAYLOR *Workes*, 1630

I wish you'd mind the child—it is a crumpling up and playing almighty smart with that *fim-flam* book, which cost me one pound one

BULWER-LYTTON *My Novel*, X. xix.

**fimsy.** [Journalism.] 1. Thin paper on which, with the use of carbon paper, several copies are written at once, or the “copy” so produced.

The sharpest of the reporters had his *fimsy* up in a minute, and took notes of the proceedings

BESANT AND RICE *Golden Butterfly*, XVIII

2. [Brit.] A bank-note.

Will you take it in *fimsies*, or will you have it all in tin?

*Punch*, XXIX, 10.

**fing.** To throw a missile of any sort; hence, to cast aspersions; make sneering remarks; flout; as, to take a sly *fling* at theology; a *fling* at the present.

At human hearts we *fling*, nor ever miss the mark

PRIOR *Chloe Hunting*, 20.

A stormy debate followed, vivified by the *flings* and taunts of John Randolph

LODGE *Webster*, 134

—to **fling about.** To scatter around —to **fling away, off, over, or up.** To cast or throw aside, abandon or disown, throw or give up

Of the Western provinces . . . she was the last that was conquered, and the first that was *flung away*

MACAULAY *History of England*, I, 4.

You *flung me off*, before the court disgraced me

FLETCHER AND MASSINGER *False One*, act iv, sc. 2.

—to **fling from or out.** To start and rush with impatience or passion, dash impetuously, flounce, as, to *fling* out of a room.

Granville *flung from* the council chamber

MOTLEY *Dutch Republic*, II, ii, 146.

—to **fling in one's face.** To throw up to one by referring sneeringly in one's presence to (something said or done) —to **fling the head.** To toss the head back as in contempt or anger —to **fling the helve after the hatchet.** To act recklessly; risk all in an effort to recover losses —to **have one's fling.** To have liberty of motion or action or unrestrained indulgence of one's will or pleasure

They took care previously to *have their fling*

BARRINGTON *Personal Sketches*, II, 435.

I should like to *have my fling* out before I marry

THACKERAY *Pendennis*, xxxix.

**flip a coin.** [U. S.] To spin or toss a coin in order to decide something by augury of “heads or tails.”

**flivver.** 1. [U. S.] A cheap motor-car. 2. [Naval.] A destroyer of the 750-ton class.

**floater.** [U. S. Politics.] 1. A citizen who votes fraudulently when, where, and as often, as he is paid for it.

Expressions indicating the intention to buy the Indiana *floaters*

*Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 5, 1888.

2. A voter not attached to any party or principle whose vote can be bought. 3. A representative of a district comprising several counties none of which alone is entitled to representation.

**floating-island.** Boiled custard with the beaten whites of eggs floating on the surface.

**floating-star.** A frostflower.

**flog a dead horse.** See under DEAD.

**flog the clock.** To push the hands ahead so as to lessen the time for work.

**flood, main.** 1. Tide at its highest point; high tide. 2. A large sheet of water.

**floor.** 1. To knock down; defeat in argument; confound.

That moment the farmer let drive at the drover, which *floored* him

HAGGART *Life*, 15.

2. [Brit. University.] To pluck or plow.

So if the master is directing his suspicions to the seniors, he'll get *floored*

Mrs H WOOD *The Channings*, V.

—to get in on the ground floor. To enter into a commercial enterprise at the beginning, also, to secure a profitable share in an undertaking or business —to have or get the floor. In parliamentary parlance, to have or get the right to address the house, used also figuratively.—to take the floor. To arise and take part in a debate or to address a meeting

**floored.** Stumped; overwhelmed; also, beaten; knocked out, ruined.

**floorer.** An unanswerable argument, sweeping decision; also, a knock-out or knock-down blow.

**floor-walker.** 1. [U. S.] A shop or store employee having restricted managerial functions in a department, and serving as a guide to his employer's customers. 2. [Brit.] A shop-walker.

**flop.** 1. To fall suddenly; collapse; break down. 2. To change sides or allegiance, as he *flopped* to the majority: usually with *over*.

**flootsam.** Goods which are swept or cast into the sea and are found floating: frequently used in phrase with *jetsam*.

**flourish** is used idiomatically in **it's one thing to flourish and another to fight**: It is one thing to make a brave show but another to prove one's courage.

**flower of life, to be in the.** To be in the prime of one's age.

**Flowery Kingdom.** China: a translation of the native name *Hwa-kwo*.

**flowery language.** Highly embellished or florid speech. In England, a euphemism for blasphemous or obscene speech.

**flu or flue.** [U. S.] Influenza.

**flubdub and guff.** [U. S.] Clap-trap, high-falutin talk; highly ornate rhetoric: commonly abbreviated *flubdub*.

**flue or spout, up the.** Pawned, pledged; dead or disabled in mind or body; to be in an awkward or difficult position. Also rendered "Where the woodbine twineth", i.e., *up the spout*.

I had sometimes to leave half my stock in *flue* with a deputy for a night's rest

MATHEW *London Labor and London Poor*, II, 250

**fluff.** [Brit.] 1. [Stage Slang.] Lines imperfectly learned and delivered; hence **fluffy**, of uncertain memory, and **fluffer**, one who is absent-minded or forgetful. 2. A shortage in making change: used by booking-clerks. 3. Members of a chorus, as of burlesque, especially the dancers.

But even as seen through a cloud of *fluff* the burlesque is irresistably amusing

WILLIAM ARCHER in *London World*.

**fluke.** 1. A lucky stroke the result of accident rather than skill; a point. The most unexpected *fluke* at trente et quarante

EDMUND YATES *Rock Ahead* I, vi.

2. A failure; fiasco. 3. [Brit. School Slang.] To shirk.

"By Jove! I think I shall *fluke* doing verses," . . . said Butler Burke

*Eton School Days*, xvi (1864).

**flumadiddle.** [U. S.] 1. Nonsense; humbug; flummery. 2. [New Eng.] Salt pork, bread, molasses and spices cooked into a cake for fishermen.

They feast on *flumadiddle*, a dish composed, I am given to understand, of stale bread, pork fat, molasses, cinnamon, allspice, and cloves

G A SALA in *Illustrated London News*, July 19, 1884

**flummy.** 1. [U. S.] A bread-pudding. 2. [Brit.] (1) Nonsense; flattery; blarney; gammon. (2) Oatmeal boiled to a jelly.

[2 (1)] She swallowed Lord Crab's *flummy* just as she would so many musharums

THACKERAY *Yellowplush Papers*

[2 (2)] To make *flummy*—Take half a peck of wheat-bran, let it soak three or four days in two gallons of water, then strain out the liquid part, pressing it hard, boil it to the consumption of a third part so that when it cools it will be like a jelly and keep long. When you heat any of it season it with sugar, and a little rose and orange-flower-water and add a little cream or milk and it will be very pleasant and nourishing

*The Way to Get Wealth*, 1714.

**flummocks, flummox, or flummux.** To puzzle, perplex, bewilder, silence, abash, disappoint or victimize.

**flunk.** [U. S.] To fail; weaken; withdraw, as from fear.

But he never *flunked*, and he never lied.

I reckon he never knowed how. JOHN HAY *Jim Bludsoe*.

**funkey.** 1. One who flunks. 2. A servant in livery.

(1) I bore him safely through Horace,

Saved him from the *funkey's* doom. YALE *Literary Magazine*, 1859.

**flush.** I. a. Well provided with money: used in many combinations to indicate abundance, as flush of his notions, prodigal in his ideas

Since you are so *flush*, sir, you shall give me a locket of diamonds of three hundred diamonds

DRYDEN *Wild Gallant*, act II, sc. 1.

II. n. In cribbage, piquet or poker, a hand of cards all of one suit.

**fluster.** 1. To abash or confuse. 2. To befuddle.

**flutter.** 1. To move about restlessly; quiver or tremble with excitement or emotion. 2. To confuse; agitate or excite. 3. To flit or hover.

Lady [Jane Crawley] swept out of the room *fluttering* with her own audacity

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair*, LV, p. 621.

**fly, a.** Sharp; knowing; wide awake; wise.

He's a prig, and a smart one too, he's *fly*, is Harry. H KINGSLEY *Ravenshoe*, XXXV.

**fly, n.** 1. A two winged dipterous insect common in dwelling-houses.

2. [Brit.] A four wheeled hackney coach.—to break a fly on a wheel. To waste energy and time on a futile task.

**fly (v.)** is used in the following idiomatic phrases:—**fly a kite.** To raise money on an accommodation paper

You have a *kite* you cannot *fly*, and creditors are pressing

G R SIMS *Ballads of Babylon*.

—**fly around or round.** [U S] To move about briskly, be active, energetic

Old 'ooman, *fly around* and git something for the Squire and Dick to eat

HOOPER *Widow Rugby's Husband*, 44.

—**fly at, on or upon.** To attack with fury; assail, as with vituperation used both literally and figuratively

When an enraged conscience shall *fly at* him and take him by the throat

SOUTH *Sermons*, I John, III 21.

—**fly high.** To play for large stakes, be extravagant. Antithesis of to fly low, to be saving, strive to make oneself inconspicuous, sing small—on the fly. [U. S.] Passing through the air, as a ball while in transit: usually with catch

Ketchum was caught on the fly

CHADWICK *Base-ball*, 41.

—to fly in pieces. To break up suddenly, split up

This pure metal rather than hold one drop that's venomous, of itself it *flies in pieces*.

MASSINGER *Renegade*, act II, sc. 3.

—**fly in the face of.** 1. To court death or danger. 2. To set at defiance, oppose recklessly and violently

Shall he come and *fly in the face of* the Prince? Shall he say it is illegal?

*Tryal of the Bishops*, 133 (1689).

Thwackum held that this was *flying* in Mr Allworthy's face

—**fly off the handle.** [U S Colloq] To lose control of oneself through passion  
Aunt Keziah was in such a pucker to have everything nice, I didn't know but she would *fly off the handle* FIELDING *Tom Jones*, III, viii

—**fly out.** 1. To rush, run, or shoot out quickly 2. To break away from moral restraint, burst forth 3. To give vent to passion SEBA SMITH *Major Jack Downing*, 216

(1) The ice shivering with the violence of the strain, the anchor *flew out*  
(2) Eighty Mahometans came *flying out* from under their hatches SCORESBY *Acc Arctic Reg*, II, 349

—**flyaway.** Disposed to flightiness or to run or blow away, flying around, fluttering, restless; harum-scarum, giddy COGAN's transl of *Pinto's Trav*, xiv, 43.

His reducing the *fly-away* farmer's daughters to a proper sense of their condition PRATT *Liberal Opinion*, II, 230.

**flying carriage.** A stage-coach that, traveling by relays, covers the course over which it plies at express speed.

At the close of the reign of Charles II, *flying carriages* ran thrice a week from London to all the chief towns MACAULAY *History of England*, I, 378

**flying coaches.** Machines erected at country fairs having swings fitted with seats, as in a coach, by which persons were carried around in a vertical circle. See quotation.

The *flying-coaches* are planted in the proper places and like the fickle wheel of fortune, toss their inhabitants into all the varieties of life Now at the top, and with one turn at the bottom POOR ROBIN, 1733

**flying-colors, to come off with.** 1. To be triumphantly successful; gain the victory, as in an argument or contest; as, he *came off*, at the disputation, *with flying colors*. 2. To march out, as the garrison of a surrendered stronghold, with flags flying a token of honorable defeat.

**Flying Dutchman.** 1. A legendary phantom ship reported seen near the Cape of Good Hope. Its Dutch skipper, for blasphemously swearing that he would double the cape against the wind is doomed to sail against the wind till the Day of Judgment. 2. The captain of this vessel. 3. An express train running from London to Exeter.

**fly-the-garter.** A variety of leap-frog in which the *garter* is a line of stones from which one must leap over the back of one's playmate.

**fly-up-the-creek.** [U. S.] A small green heron.

Hence used as a nickname for an inhabitant of Florida.

A giddy, capricious person.

MURRAY Dict.  
CENT Dict.

**fogey, foggy.** An old-fashioned or eccentric person, regardless of age or sex; originally, a soldier or sailor in hospital or barracks.

**fold one's hands.** 1. To assume an attitude of prayer or supplication.

2. To rest continually; give up work; give way to idleness.

(1) She *folds her hands* in the manner of a supplicating child

DICKENS *Mutual Friend*, I, 11.

To no American would [fortune] seem a reason for *folding his hands*

NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1887.

**follower.** [Brit] The sweetheart or beau of a maidservant.

It is safer, unkind as it may seem, to forbid the presence of a *follower* in the house.

THE SPECTATOR, London, Jan 15, 1870.

**follow suit.** To follow the example set by another: from the playing of a card of the suit led.

The "Monday Review" happened to be the first to notice "Two Lovers"; but other journals speedily *followed suit* W. E. NORRIS *Adrian Vidal*, xvi.

**follow the sea.** To pursue the calling of a sailor

Mr Trelawney had *followed the seas*

STEVENSON *Treasure Island*, II, 1

**food** is used idiomatically in the following phrases:—**food for powder.**

Fighting men, soldiers

I did never see such pitiful rascals.

Tut, tut, good enough to toss *food for powder, food for powder*; they'll fill a pit as well as better

SHAKESPEARE *I Henry IV*, act iv, sc 2.

—**food for reflection.** Something to think about used usually censoriously or implying blame —**food for the gods.** Mushrooms so-called by Nero because they were used by Agrippina to kill Claudius —**food for worms.** Dead and buried, a prey to worms.

A man may fish with the *worm that hath eat of a king*, and eat of the flesh that hath fed of that worm

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet*, act iv, sc 3

HOTSPUR No, Percy, thou art dust,

And *food for*— (dies)

PRINCE HENRY. *For worms, brave Percy.* Fare thee well, great heart!

SHAKESPEARE *I Henry IV*, act v, sc 5

—**food of hope, love, etc.** That which sustains, nourishes or increases hope, love, etc., a sustaining influence

**fool** is used idiomatically in the following phrases: **fool after or around.**

[U S] 1. To trifle with, hang about 2. To loaf around, dawdle

(1) From what I hear you came to Riddleton *fooling after* my daughter Now I'll have no catterwauling of that sort

HAWLEY SMARTE *Post to Finish*, XVII.

—**fool away.** 1. To waste or spend money foolishly 2. To spend in inactivity or idleness, as, to *fool away* one's opportunities

(1) He *fools away* his time, his money and his health

MRS C CLARKE *Shakespeare's Character*, XX, 507

(2) Where I *fooled away* all the afternoon.

PEPYS *Diary* June 1, 1660

—**in a fool's paradise.** In a state of delusion—the abode of vanity and nonsense, the limbo of vanities Hence, in a state of deceptive bliss, or happiness founded on vain hopes

You have been revelling *in a fool's paradise* of leisure

J BERESFORD *Miseries of Human Life*, XII, xxxii.

—**to be a fool for one's pains.** 1. To be the victim, tool, butt or toy of another 2. To take trouble unnecessarily; do a thankless task —**to fool with.** 1. To meddle or tamper with something one does not understand 2. To be insincere in one's attentions, as a man with a maid —**to make a fool of.** To render ridiculous, put into a false position, deceive, disappoint

But I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never *make me such a fool*

SHAKESPEARE *Much Ado About Nothing*, act ii, sc 3

—**to put the fool on or upon.** To treat as a fool, charge with folly

To be thought knowing you must first *put the fool upon* all mankind

DRYDEN.

**fool-hen.** [Western U. S.] A grouse, especially when young because of their tameness which verges on stupidity. THEODORE ROOSEVELT *Hunting Trips* p. 94.

**foot** is used idiomatically in the following phrases: **at foot.** Recently

born; as, a mare with foal *at foot* —**at one's feet.** In a state of submission, overpowered, subdued —**by foot.** By walking —**on foot.** 1. On the feet, afoot 2. Able to be about; in health, active 3. In course of accomplishment, going on —**on one's feet.** Out of pecuniary embarrassment —**to brace the feet.** To understand or be informed as to anything a sailors' term —**to carry off one's feet.** To win completely over by enthusiasm —**to change the feet.** [Scot.] To make a change of shoes and stockings —**to die on one's feet.** [Scot.] To expire suddenly without any long sickness —**to fall on one's feet.** See under FALL —**to foot a bill.** To defray expenses, pay or settle a bill

If our plan succeeded, the landlord was *to foot the bill* and stand treat

DURIVAGE *Stray Subj.*, 183

—**to foot it.** To walk or dance. —**to have one's foot in the grave.** To be near death.

He has twenty thousand a year . . . and *one foot in the grave*

JAMES PAYN *Luck of the Darrells*, XV  
—to **keep the feet**. To lead a correct life, conduct oneself with propriety —to **know the length of one's foot**. To know one's character

But you shall not *know the length of my foot*, until by your cunning you get commendation  
LYLY *Euphues*

—to **or on one's feet**. To or in a standing position, as, the call brought him quickly to his feet —to **pause the feet into**. [Scot.] To push the feet into, kick —to **pull foot**. [Ir.] To make haste, hurry —to **put one's best foot foremost**. 1. To do one's best, show oneself at one's best 2. To walk as rapidly as possible —to **put one's foot down or upon**. To express one's mind firmly, make a resolute determination, oppose vigorously —to **put one's foot in it**. To get into a difficulty or scrape, as by a mistake or intermeddling, make a mess of, spoil

I *put my foot into it*, as we say, for I was nearly killed  
MARRYAT *Peter Simple*, XII

—to **set beneath the feet**. [Scot.] To hold in contempt; regard as lower  
—to **set one's foot upon**. To oppose

Wolsey *set his foot upon* this plan J. H. BLUNT *Ref Church Eng.*, I, 65.

—to **set on foot**. To start or originate, make a beginning of, as to set a plan on foot  
—under foot. 1. Under the feet 2. (1) In the way (2) In one's power, as to have a person *under one's foot* (3) Below par

**footing, to pay one's**. To treat one's fellow workmen, students, etc., on joining in a work, or being admitted to a trade, society, etc.

"*Pay your footing now*, Master Kyrle Daly, before you go further," said one  
CARLETON *Collegian's Colleen Bawn*, 94.

I was going aloft, and wished to *pay my footing*  
CLARK RUSSELL *An Ocean Tragedy*, 86

**footlights, to smell of the**. To reflect the atmosphere of the stage; to affect the characteristics or mannerisms of professional actors.

My own art has a little too much *smell of the footlights* OUIDA *Moths*, II, 322

**foozle**. 1. *n* 1. A poorly played stroke; a miss, boggle; failure. 2. A tedious person, bore, fool

Frumps and *foozles* in Eaton Square  
RHODA BROUGHTON *Cometh up as a Flower*, XXVI.

II. *v*. To misplay, miff, boggle

Mark *foozled* his second stroke  
Field, Feb 25, 1888.

**forbidden fruit**. 1. Unlawful pleasure. 2. A variety of orange 3. Specifically, the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil See *Genesis* III.

**forbidden tree**. A tree the felling of which was forbidden by law, as in the Forest of Dean, in Gloucestershire, England Called also **forbid-tree**.

**force, of**. Necessarily.

Good reasons must, *of force*, give place to better  
SHAKESPEARE *Julius Caesar*, act IV, sc. 3.

**force one's hand, to**. To compel one to act or to disclose one's plans or intentions.

**force, to be in**. To be ready for action, as an armed body.

**force, to come into**. To be effective, as an ordinance or law.

**fore, to come to the**. To be in evidence; come forward

Mr Ruskin *comes to the fore* with some characteristic remarks on the education of children  
The New York Tribune, April 2, 1886

**Forefather's day**. December 21 from the day in 1620 when the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, Mass., observed in New England



**forelock, to take time or the occasion by the.** To make the best of one's opportunities, act promptly.

Time is painted with a lock before, and bald behind, signifying thereby that we must take time by the forelock, for when it is once past, there is no recalling it

**forget oneself.** 1. To lose the consciousness of one's condition; become rapt. 2. To lose self-control, and be guilty of something unbecoming

SWIFT

(2) How is he to answer my question, if he hold his tongue? *You forget yourself*  
CHARLES READE *Never too Late to Mend*, XI.

3. To be unselfish.

**forked radish, like a.** Long, lean and narrow; ill-fed or half-starved; as Shallow in the following quotation:

I do remember him like a man made after supper of a cheese-paring, when a' was naked, he was, for all the world, like a forked radish, with a head fantastically carved upon it with a knife  
SHAKESPEARE *11 King Henry I* act iii, sc. 2

**fork out or over.** To pay out or spend; settle, as an account, hand-over.

If I am willing to fork out a sum of money he may be willing to give up his chance  
GEORGE ELIOT *Daniel Deronda*, xxviii

**forlorn hope.** A detachment commissioned or volunteering for some exceptionally perilous or desperate service; also, any member of such detachment, hence, any enterprise or contest having little prospect of success.

**form, to be in.** 1. To be in first class condition and action, as a race-horse or a boat-crew. 2. To be in accord with the canons of fashion.

(1) When we say that a horse is "*in form*" we intend to convey to our hearers that he is in high condition, and fit to run  
WALSH AND LUPTON *Horse*, VI, 48.

(2) These officers accordingly attended *in great form*

LINDLEY *Voy to Brazil* 126

**form, to take.** To become clear or assume definite shape: said of ideas.

**forth, and so.** And so on, indicating more besides that which has already been stated, and the rest.

**forthright.** In a straightforward manner.

A man should not be able to look other than directly and forthright

EMERSON *Experience*

**forthwith.** With no delay, at once.

**fortune, to tell one's.** To predict what lies in the future for one, foretell the good or evil that may befall one. Hence, **fortune teller**, one who by some professed faculty of seeing into the future tells fortunes.

**forty** is used idiomatically in the following:—**Forty-niner.** [U. S.]

A gold-seeker who went to California in 1849 —**forty-parson power.** Vocal strength of choral power

Oh, for a *forty-parson power* to chant Thy praise, Hypocrisy!

BYRON *Don Juan*, canto x, st. 34

—**forty-rod lightning.** [U. S.] Whisky of so potent a nature that it will kill at a distance of forty rods

He got powerful thirsty, and clumb out on the porch roof and shd down a stanchion and traded his new coat for a jug of *forty-rod* MARK TWAIN *Huckleberry Finn*, V, 36

—**forty to the dozen.** [Brit.] To chatter incessantly and senselessly, gabble, talk piffle —**to walk off forty to the dozen.** To decamp quickly, to make a fast getaway —**forty winks.** A brief nap

I'm tired, and I want my *forty winks*

SIMS *Mary Jane's Mem* 228.

**four-in-hand.** 1. A vehicle, as a coach, drawn by four horses; also, the horses driven in harness to such a vehicle. 2. A long necktie of which one end is passed twice over the other then slipped through the loop so made.

**four-poster.** A large bed with posts at each corner from which curtains are hung.

**Fourteenth Amendment.** [U. S. Politics.] The Reconstructive Amendment to the Constitution, defining as citizens "all persons born or naturalized in the United States," etc. Frequently misquoted for the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, and the Fifteenth Amendment which gave negroes the right to vote.

**Fourth, the.** See **FOURTH OF JULY**.

**fourth estate.** 1. The laboring classes as distinguished from (1) the Church, (2) the Lords, and (3) the Commons, and now represented in the Parliament of Great Britain by (4) the Labor Party. 2. The newspaper press designated as a distinct power in the state, presumably from the license it exercises, the liberties it enjoys, or the power it wields.

Carlyle has credited Burke with saying that "there were Three Estates in Parliament; but, in the Reporters' gallery yonder, there sat a Fourth Estate more important far than they all" (see *Heroes and Hero Worship*, Lecture V), but the statement is not recorded in Burke's published works. Carlyle's work was published in 1840, but in the "Edinburgh Review" in 1828, Macaulay used the phrase in his essay on Hallam's "Constitutional History," in the eighth paragraph from the end "The gallery in which the reporters sit has become a *fourth estate* of the realm." As Carlyle himself was a Scottish reviewer and wrote for the "Edinburgh Review" (see his essay on Burns, written in the same year—1828), it is probable that Carlyle attributed the thought to the wrong author.

**Fourth of July.** A national holiday in the United States in commemoration of the promulgation of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776: formerly celebrated in the Northern and Eastern States by elaborate displays of fireworks, and much firing of cannon and small arms. Frequently spoken of as *the Day we Celebrate*.

**foxfire.** Phosphorescent light.

The *fox fire*, as the country people call it, glowed hideously from the cold and matted bosom of the marsh.

J. P. KENNEDY *Swallow Barn*, 261.

**fox to keep one's geese, to set a.** To entrust one's money or valuables to sharpers.

**Fox trot.** A popular dance of American origin.

This dance was invented in 1914 by a New York vaudeville dancer named *Mr Fox*, and the selection of the steps was arranged by him quite independently of anything zoological.

CHARLES D'ALBERT *Saturday Review*, Dec. 11, 1915.

**foxy.** Cunning; fox-like in character and appearance.

Whatever his state of health may be, his appearance is *foxy*, not to say diabolical.

DICKENS *David Copperfield*, xlix.

**free-and-easy.** [Eng.] A convivial gathering, usually at a public house.

Clubs of all ranks, from those which have lined Pall Mall and St James's street with their palaces, down to the *free and easy* which meets in the shabby parlour of a village inn.

MACAULAY *Essays*, *Gladstone on Church and State*.

**freedom of the city.** 1. Formerly, possession by a non-member of the particular privileges of a community, as regards voting, etc., bestowed

as a mark of honor. 2. An expression of esteem conferred by a city on a distinguished visitor; also, the document conferring this distinction, usually presented in a valuable casket; as, the *freedom of the City of London*. FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary*.

**freedom of the seas.** In war, exemption from seizure at sea by the armed vessels of a belligerent of all private property of neutrals except contraband of war, as proposed at The Hague in 1907.

**free fight.** A lively unpremeditated scrimmage; a general scuffle.

**free-lance.** One who writes, sketches, or speaks unrestrainedly; especially, a journalist or artist with no steady affiliation or connection; one attached to no party who fights on his own account.

**free soil.** [U. S.] States and Territories in which, prior to the Civil War, slavery was not legalized.

*Free soil, free men, free speech, Fremont!*

*Republican Slogan in the Presidential Campaign of 1856.*

**free with, to make.** To make use of with undue freedom; take liberties with.

I advise you not to *make so free* with your servants. READE *Never too Late to Mend*.

**freeze on to.** [U. S.] 1. To take fast hold of or a strong grip on.

The competence of a juror was judged by his ability to shake ready-formed opinions, and *freeze on* to new ones. Chicago *Inter-Ocean*, March 2, 1888.

2. To attach oneself devotedly to; also, take possession of.

**freeze out.** [U. S.] 1. To compel to withdraw or retire, as by receiving coldly. 2. To force out of business by severe competition. 3. To eliminate, as in **freeze-out poker**, where a player is obliged to quit the game on losing his original stake.

(2) He thinks he can *freeze you out* by holding off till you have to raise money.

W. N. HARBEN *Abner Darnel*, 247.

**French leave.** Informal or omitted leave-taking, as by one who has stolen something. The phrase arose from the French custom of leaving a social gathering without adieux to the host and hostess.

What is called *French leave* was introduced that one person leaving might not disturb the company. TRUSLER *Chesterfield's Principles and Politeness*, 72.

**fresh.** [U. S.] Presumptuous; bold; cheeky; lacking the sense of propriety, free—**fresh as a daisy, an oyster, paint, or as a rose.** In the pink of condition, full of health and strength.

**Friday or man Friday.** One's assistant; a political henchman; especially in the phrases **his, my, or your man Friday**: from the savage in Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe," who was rescued by Crusoe on a Friday—**Black Friday.** See under **BLACK**—**Friday-faced.** [Brit.] Gloomy and dejected in appearance; sour-faced, solemn, sad perhaps from Friday being a fast day.

What a *Friday-fac'd* slave it is! I think in my conscience his face never keeps holiday. *Wily Beguiled* in HAWKINS *English Drama*, III, 350.

—**Friday fare.** Food for a fast-day.—**Friday feast.** A fish dinner, or fast-day meal.

**friend at court.** A person of sufficient influence or interest to serve another.

When the Lord was to bring his people into Egypt He provided so as they should have a *friend at court* before they came. DICKSON on *Psalms CV*, 16.

—**a friend of God.** An extremely pious person; one who thanks the Lord he is not like other men—to be friends with. To be or to get on good terms with.

**frighten the French, to.** To achieve the impossible in inspiring terror; to beat the Dutch in scaring the neighbors.

**frightfulness.** A method of conducting warfare characterized by brutality and terrorism as practised by German armies in the War of 1914-18: from the German word *shrecklichkeit*.

The German doctrine of *frightfulness* was based upon the Roman tyrant's maxim, "let me be hated so long as I am feared" *Saturday Review*, London, Oct. 26, 1918.

**frills.** [U. S.] Fancy accomplishments; ornamental things; hence, a man with no frills, a man of simplicity.—to take the frills out of one. To bring to a state of submission.

I'll bet I take some of these frills out of you before I'm done with you

MARK TWAIN *Huckleberry Finn*, 33.

**frisk.** [U. S. Police.] 1. To search a prisoner by going through his pockets. 2. To investigate a prisoner's "pedigree" or record. 3. To pick pockets.

**frog's march, to give the.** [Brit.] To carry a refractory or turbulent prisoner to a police station face downward.

**front, the.** The position nearest and facing the enemy; the battle-line; the army in the field; hence, the most advanced position in any enterprise—to come to the front. To rise to a prominent or commanding position.

**frontispiece.** [Brit.] The face.

He said that he had had an accident—or rather, a row—and that he had come out of it with considerable damage to his frontispiece

A TROLLOPE *Small House at Allington*, II, 47.

**frostflower.** A bulbous plant of Mexico and the southern United States with star-like white waxy flowers.

**frozen credit.** Credit which is not available for immediate realization.

**frozen money.** Money so invested that it can not be used for immediate needs.

**frump.** 1. A sour old maid or a prim old lady. 2. [Brit.] A slattern.

(1) When that old frump was young, they actually made verses about her.

THACKERAY *Virginians*, XXXI.

**fry, small.** Persons or objects of small importance; little things collectively; small potatoes.

**frying pan into the fire, to jump or leap out of the.** To go from bad to worse; get out of an embarrassing position into one more embarrassing still or go from a lesser to a greater evil.

Leape out of the frying pan into the fyre and change from il paine to worse.

JOHN HEYWOOD *Proverbs*, 126.

**fuddled.** Muddled; intoxicated.

**fudge.** 1. Nonsense; humbug; also, a lie; an exaggeration.

It is fudge to tell a child to love every living creature—a tapeworm, for example.

*Tangled Talk*, 108.

2. A confection of sugar and chocolate.

**fugleman or flugelman.** [U. S.] A political leader.

**full** occurs idiomatically in the following terms:—**full.** [U. S.] Intoxicated—**full dress.** The formal attire required at court receptions or at social gatherings—**full-hand.** [U. S.] In poker, three of a kind and one pair—**full in the waistcoat.** [Brit.] Of large girth—**in full.** Containing the full value or amount; without reduction, abatement, or omission, not abridged: used also to connote in complete settlement, as of a claim, debt, demand, etc

To assign her Five Hundred Pounds in full of all her demands upon her family

RICHARDSON *Pamela*, II, 368

—**in full figure**, or **fig.** In full dress or prescribed costume

The Speaker sits at one end all *in full fig* with a clerk at the table below

—**full swing.** Unrestrained liberty or license; free course, full or untrammelled operation or speed — **to the full.** To the utmost extent, fully.

I must expect my right *to the full* PENN Pennsylvania Hist. Soc. Memoirs, ix, 53

**funk.** I. *n.* 1. Fear; panic; as, to be in a blue *funk*. See under BLUE.

2. A person so affected. II. *v.* To throw into a state of fear; be scared.

—**funk-hole.** [Brit.] A dug-out during the World War.

He huddled in a *funk-hole* beyond the Vesle

P C MACFARLANE in Saturday Evening Post, Jan. 18, 1919.

**funky.** Nervous, frightened, timid.

**funny, to feel.** [Brit.] To experience an unusual sensation, as from the effects of drugs, liquor, narcotics: also, to be overcome by one's emotions.

**funny-bone.** The part of the inner condyle of the humerus where the ulnar nerve is exposed at the elbow; the crazy-bone.

They smack and they thwack,

Till your *funny bones* crack,

As if you were stretched on the rack.

BARHAM Ingoldsby Legends, Bloudie Jack.

**fun of, to make.** To ridicule; make a butt of; also, rendered, **to poke**

**fun at.** To direct one's humor at; make the object of one's banter.

The American in a dry way began to *poke his fun* at the unfortunate traveller

Hood Up the Rhine, 157.

**fur or feathers fly, to make or see the.** To attack with violence, as when one tom-cat or game-cock attacks another.

"Wait until the National Committee assembles on Feb. 22," said the organizer,

"and you will *see the fur fly* from the Cleveland hide"

The Denver Republican, Feb. 29, 1888.

**futures, to buy, sell or deal in.** [Financial.] To gamble on the rise or fall of prices in stocks.

**futurism.** A secession from traditional forms in art, literature, and music which originated in Italy in 1910, and aims at originality unhampered.—

**futurist.** 1. One who practises futurism 2. A person of expectant temperament who lives in the future rather than the present or the past, an anticipator

**fuzzy-wuzzy.** [Brit. Army Slang.] A Soudanese tribesman.

And 'ere's to you, *Fuzzy-Wuzzy*, with your 'ay rick 'ead of 'air

KIPLING Fuzzy-Wuzzy.

**G**

**gabhey, gabby or gaby.** [Brit.] A simpleton, fool, or a babbler.

Don't stand laughing there like a great *gaby*. H. KINGSLEY *Geoffrey Hamlyn*, IX.

**gad, gadabout.** The act of gadding or walking about without serious object; also, one who does this; as, I have been *on the gad* every evening this week —to **gad about, abroad, out.** To wander or rove about without aim or object, rush madly from one excitement to another, go from one place to another as if impelled by curiosity or seeking diversion.

**gag.** A joke, hoax; in theatrical slang, an interpolation in a part by an actor.

You won't bear any malice now, will you? All *gag* of mine, you know, about old Miss Ponsonby. *All the Year Round*, Feb. 18, 1872.

**gag bill or law.** [U. S.] A law limiting parliamentary debate or suppressing freedom of the press. Compare **CLOTURE.**

**gain ground, to.** 1. To make headway; progress; secure the advantage.

The Jews [in England] are not only extraordinarily powerful and numerous but are *gaining ground* day by day. *The Fortnightly Review*, London, 1887.

2. To be or become more generally accepted; advance; be commonly believed; as, the theory that "the seed of war is industrial and commercial rivalry is *gaining ground*."

**galaxy.** Same as **MILKY WAY.**

**gall.** 1. An intensely bitter substance. 2. Hence, bitterness of feeling.

3. [U. S.] Confidence; audacity; assurance.

(2) Why the good man's share

In life was *gall* and bitterness of soul. THOMSON *Winter*, 1054.

(3) With infinite *gall* he has opened an office for the sale of "original packages" only a few feet away. *The Voice*, New York, July 31, 1891.

**Gallagher! Let her go.** Go ahead; all right; let her go; an Americanism of unknown origin traced by various persons to different sources. Walsh in his "Literary Curiosities" (page 404), says: "It is impossible to fix on the origin of the phrase;" but see under **LET.**

**gallanty-show.** A shadow pantomime in miniature from figures cut from paper; Chinese shadows.

**gallery, to play to the, or talk to the.** To endeavor to secure popular applause as by cheapening one's art, as a player, by appealing to the patronage of those who occupy the cheaper seats, or an editor, a speaker, preacher, etc., by pandering to the prejudices of the people who think.

His dispatches were, indeed, too long and too swelling in phrase; for herein he was always *playing to the galleries*. *The Standard*, London, Oct. 23, 1872.

**galley-slave.** [Brit.] A compositor, from his practise of transferring type from stick to galley.

**gallimaufry.** A jumble, medley, hodge-podge, or hash of any kind: origin unknown.

Are you the author then of that *Gallimaufry* of Prophecies, that's published in your name? R. L'ESTRANGE *Visions of Quevedo*, 57.

**gallinipper.** A large mosquito.

The *gallinippers* of Florida are said to have aided the Seminoles in appalling our armies. MRS. KIRKLAND *Forest Life*, I, 184.

**gallivant.** To play the gallant, to make oneself agreeable to the other sex; also, to hustle about or fuss.

You were out all day yesterday, and *gallivanting* somewhere, I know.

DICKENS *Nicholas Nickleby*, lxiv.

**gallows-bird.** One who either has been hanged or deserves hanging; an abandoned criminal.

Had this been in another place, young *gallows' bird*, I had stowed the lugs out of thy head.

SCOTT *Fair Maid of Perth*, II.

**gallowsses, galluses.** Braces or suspenders.

Braces . . . used, in the north of England, to be known by the expressive name of *galluses*.

G. A. SALA in *Illustrated London News*, Sept. 22, 1883.

**galoot, galloot.** A green recruit; an awkward person; also, a fellow: used contemptuously.

Four greater *galloots* were never picked up  
He could lam any *galloot* of his inches in America

MARRYAT *Jacob Faithful*, XXXIV.

MARK TWAIN *Innocent at Home*, 22.

**galore.** Plenty; abundance.

*Galore* of alcohol to fortify the trade.

RUXTON *Life in the Far West*, 14.

**gam.** An exchange of visits at sea, as by whalermen. See GAMMING.

**game.** A scheme, trick, or design; an art or artifice: sometimes qualified by *little*.

Come, what's your *little game*? [what are you up to?]

JUSTIN MCCARTHY *Don Quixote*, XIII.

She knew how to work the *game* of fascination all right

J. NEWMAN *Scampering Tracks*, 46.

—the *game* is not worth the candle. The object is not worth the labor, effort, or cost —the *game* is up. The plan was unsuccessful, the scheme failed, all is over, nothing more can be done.

**game, be or die.** Be unflinchingly courageous; be ready to begin or to continue a fight or struggle; die fighting or with one's boots on.

Hale mounted the scaffold saying only that he wished he had another life to give to his country . . . André called upon the bystanders to observe that he met his fate like a brave man—that, as a more vulgar criminal would have said, he "*died game*"

BRYANT AND GAY *United States*, iv, 97.

I am *game* to try.

CHARLES READE *Never too Late to Mend*, I, xxi.

**game of, to make.** To make fun of; to ridicule or make sport of.

Do they seek occasion of new quarrels,  
On my refusal, to distress me more,  
Or make a *game* of my calamities?

MILTON *Samson Agonistes*, 1329.

Mrs. Mills . . . made great *game* of her and her husband

MRS. TRIMMER *Two Farmers*, 26.

**game, to play the.** To abide by the rules; to do the correct thing.

I really think he is . . . not *playing the game*

GEOFFREY DRAGA *Cyril*, VII.

**game at which two can play.** A course of action equally open to one's opponent.

"I'll have you both licked when I get out, that I will," rejoined the boy, beginning to snivel.

"Two can *play at that game*, mind you," said Tom.

HUGHES *Tom Brown's School Days*.

**gammig.** [U. S.] An exchange of visits and gossip at sea. See quotation.

When two or more American whalers meet in mid-ocean, and there are no whales in sight, it is customary to tack topsails and exchange visits. This social intercourse the whalermen call *gammig*.

G. A. SALA in *Illustrated London News*, July 19, 1884.

**gammon.** Nonsense; humbug; deceit.

Behold yon servitor of God and Mammon,  
Who, binding up his Bible with his ledger,  
Blends gospel texts with trading *gammon*.

Hood *Poems*, VI, 96

**gammy.** [Australia.] A stupid or silly person; a fool.

Well, of all the *gammies*, you are the *gammiest*, Slowboy, to go and string yourself  
to a woman when you might have had the pick of Melbourne

HUME NISBET *Bushranger's Sweetheart*, 101.

**gamp.** 1. A monthly nurse, so named after Mrs. Sarah *Gamp*, a character in Dickens' "Martin Chuzzlewit." 2. A large loosely-tied umbrella such as was favored by Mrs. *Gamp*.

**gander, v.** To walk in a leisurely lingering way.

She had *gandered* down to the hall to give [the message] to the porter.

KINGSLEY *Ravenshoe*, xlvii.

**gander, n.** 1. [U. S.] A grass-widower. 2. [Gt. Brit.] A married man.

**gander-pulling.** A cruel rustic sport in which a horseman, riding at full speed, tries to catch a gander hung from a pole by the feet, by its greased neck and twist off its head.

**gang.** [U. S.] A body of men organized for some particular task or labor; also, a band of men associated for some purpose: usually depreciatory and implying men in disrepute; as, a *gang* of thieves.—**gangster.** [U. S.] A member of a *gang* of ruffians; also, a gunman.

**gantlet or gauntlet, to run the.** A military punishment, practised as a mode of torture by savages, in which a prisoner is stripped and forced to run between two lines of men, who strike him with whips, sticks, clubs or other weapons. The spelling *gauntlet* is a result of a confusion with *gauntlet*, a glove, the word is derived from the Swedish *gallopp*, gate-leap.

Yet, if the pupil be of a texture to bear it, the best university that can be recommended to a man of ideas is the *gauntlet* of the mob.

EMERSON *Society and Solitude* 82.

Books, like character, are works of time, and must run the *gauntlet* of criticism to gain enduring celebrity.

A. BRONSON ALCOTT *Concord Days*, 52

**gapes, the.** A fit of gaping or yawning.

Another hour of music was to give delight or the *gapes*, as real or affected taste for it prevailed

JANE AUSTEN *Persuasion*, XX.

**garret.** The head; hence, to have one's *garret unfurnished*, to be empty-headed, stupid, or doltish.

**garrison-hack.** [Brit.] A woman who practises coquetry or plays at courtship; a flirt.

The *garrison-hacks* whose names and flirtations are standing jokes

JAMES GRANT *One of the Six Hundred*, I, 8.

**gas.** I. *n.* Boastful or vain talk; piffle.

[The talk of secession] is all mere *gas*, and I regret that some portion of this *gas* has entered both ends of the Capitol

MR. ATCHISON, of Missouri, in the U. S. Senate, Aug 2, 1860.

II. *v.* 1. [Military.] To attack or defend by means of poison gas.  
2. To talk braggingly or in a boastful manner; blow.

**gas-house district.** [U. S.] A section of some cities where gas-reservoirs are located; hence, a district undesirable for habitation, frequented by gangsters.

**gasser.** [Brit.] A braggart.



**gate of ivory and gate of horn.** In Greek legend, the gates through which false or true dreams come.

Of all his [Laud's] dreams the only one, we suspect, which came through the *gate of horn*.  
MACAULAY *Essays*, Hampden, 204.

**gates.** [Brit. Univ.] The closing hour, at which time students not within bounds are said to **break gates**, for which offense they may be **gated** or **get the gate**, which is to be confined during certain hours to college precincts. That's the ticket; that will land me just in time for *gates*.

BRADLEY *Tales of College Life*, 19.

The two least culpable of the party have been *gated*.

*The Morning Advertiser*, London, May 23, 1870.

**Gath.** A stronghold and district in Philistia, sometimes, like Askelon, used for Philistia itself. Hence, **to be mighty in Gath**, to be a leader of the Philistines.—**tell it not in Gath.** Do not let your enemies hear and rejoice: from the lament of David over the death of Jonathan in battle.

*Tell it not in Gath*, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice.  
2 Samuel, i, 20.

**gathered to one's fathers or people.** Dead and buried. See quotation. So he blessed them, and was *gathered to his fathers*. 1 Maccabees, ii, 69. Then Abraham gave up the ghost . . . and was *gathered to his people*. Genesis, xiv, 8.

You may carve a shrine about my dust,  
And burn a fragrant lamp before my bones,  
When I am *gathered to the glorious Saints*.

TENNYSON *St Simeon*, l 194.

**gaudeamus.** A students' merrymaking or bout: from the first word of an ancient students' song "Gaudemus igitur," let us therefore rejoice. The **gaudy-day** of British universities; hence, a holiday, day of celebration, or anniversary festival.

On Saturday evening the first *Gaudeamus* of the session was held in the Cross Keys Hotel. *College Echoes*, St. Andrews Univ., VI, 71.

My father had recently sat next him at a *Magdalen Gaudy*.

J. A. SYMONDS *Biography* I, 224.

The annual *gaudy day* was especially a festivity of the Arts Faculty.

*Edinburgh Review*, April, 1884.

It was a *gaudy-day* for the burly London citizens.

PALGRAVE *Norm & Eng.*, III, 161.

**gauntlet, to cast, fling or throw down the.** To challenge or defy, as by throwing one's glove upon the ground, a custom of medieval times. Hence, to invite opposition with the intention of overcoming it.

He advised us to *fling down the gauntlet* fearlessly.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT *Gouverneur Morris*, 338.

—**to take up the gauntlet.** To pick up the glove that has been thrown down in defiance as a sign of readiness to accept a challenge or defy. Hence, to assume the responsibility for defense of a person challenged or opinion expressed.

The Commons at once *took up the gauntlet*. STUBBS *Const Hist*, III, xviii, 146.

**gawk.** A simpleton of either sex, especially an awkward one.

Girls brought up to be awkward *gawks*, without a chance in life.

H. FREDERIC *Seth's Brother's Wife*, IV.

**gawky.** An awkward booby, a fool; also, lanky, awkward, stupid.

Even for his cousin Samuel Newcome, a *gawky* youth with an eruptive countenance, Barnes had appropriate words of conversation. THACKERAY *Newcomes*, XLVIII.

**gay.** 1. Merry; cheerful; blithesome; lively. 2. Given to dissipation and vicious pleasures.

Is this that haughty, gallant, *gay* Lothario

ROWE *Fair Penitent*.

—**the gay science.** Literature, especially amorous poetry so called in the middle ages.

**gaze, at a.** In an attitude of bewildered wondering or hesitation.

In the reign of King Henry VIII, after the destruction of monasteries, learning was at a loss, and the University stood at a gaze what would become of her.

RAY *Proverbs*, p. 301 (1678).

**Gazette, to appear or have one's name in the.** To be officially recorded in the "London Gazette," or official record; especially, to be officially announced bankrupt after judicial decree.

**gear, to throw out of.** To disconnect, as a piece of machinery; hence, to put out of working order. Hence, **to be out of gear.** To be unfit for work.

The whole organization of labor was *thrown out of gear*.

GREEN *Hist. English People*, V, 4, 241.

**gee or gee with.** To agree or get along with; to fit.

**geese are swans, all his.** He is given to exaggeration, or is biased or wrong in estimating persons or things. Sometimes applied to doting parents who exaggerate the talents or the looks of their children. The phrase is frequently inverted **all his swans are geese**, and then means all his great ideas are trifles, or his great expectations have not materialized—**like geese on a common**. Let loose, free and aggressive, at large, wandering about said of members of Parliament during recess, and of faddists—the old woman's **picking her geese**. Snow is falling heavily.

**geewhilkens or gee whiz.** [U. S.] Exclamations of surprize or admiration.

And great *Geewhilkens!* wasn't the snow peppering down!

*Knickerbocker Magazine*, Nov., 1857.

"*Gee whiz!*" said the cook, "but ain't that nice!"

*Living Church*, Jan. 2, 1909.

**Gemini! Geminy! or Jiminy!** A mild oath or exclamation of surprize, referring to Castor and Pollux.

Well, here we are at last Oh *Gemini Gig!* how my poor bones do ache

MORTON *Secrets Worth Knowing*, I, 1.

*Mrs Malaprop* You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned—

*Lucy* O *Gemini!* I'd sooner cut my tongue out

SHERIDAN *The Rivals*, act i, sc. 2.

**gendarme.** [Fr.] A red herring.

**general.** 1. The public; the masses; the crowd. 2. A maid of all work.

(1) The play, I remember, pleased not the million, 'twas caviare to the *general*.

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet*, act ii, sc. 2

(2) That the race of *generals* threatens to become extinct is a proposition which is not really so startling as it sounds at first

*The Daily Telegraph*, London, Jan. 18, 1898.

**Geneva bands.** Linen strips worn hanging in front of the neck with certain clerical or academic garments—**Geneva cross.** A red Greek cross on a white ground—the Red Cross adopted by the Geneva Convention (1864-65) for the protection of those employed in succoring the wounded in time of war

**Gentile.** Among the Mormons, any one not a Mormon; among the Jews, anyone not a Jew.

**gentle and simple.** Noble and peasant, high born and low born.

*Gentle and simple*, Squire and Groom,  
Each one had sought his separate room

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends, Hand of Glory*, 64.

**gentleman of fortune.** An adventurer.

Why in a place like this, where nobody puts in but *gentlemen of fortune*, Silver would fly the jolly roger, you don't make no doubt of that

STEVENSON *Treasure Island*, 149

**gentleman ranker.** [Brit.] A gentleman who has enlisted as a soldier.

**gentle sex, the.** The female sex; womankind.

**German duck.** [Brit.] A sheep's head stewed with onions.

**Gerrymander.** [U. S. Pol.] To reapportion the political boundaries of a state in such a way as to give one party increased strength.

In 1812, while Elbridge Gerry was Governor of Massachusetts, the Democratic legislature, in order to secure an increased representation in the State Senate, redistricted the State in such a way that the shape of the towns forming such a district in Essex County brought out a territory of irregular outline. This was indicated on a map which Russell, editor of the *Continent*, hung in his office. Stuart, the painter, observing it, added a head, wings and claws, and exclaimed, "that will do for a salamander." "Gerrymander!" said Russell, and the word became a proverb.

*Mem Hist Boston*, III, 212

**get** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases; as, **get on or along!** Go away; get out of the way; go—**get busy.** Attend to work.—**get-nothing.** An idler—**get-penny.** A catchpenny; especially a play—**get-up.** General appearance or style, manner of production, make-up, dress—to **get about.** 1. To become known, be spread abroad. 2. To become able to move about, as in convalescence—to **get a hair in someone's neck.** [Scot.] To pay off an old score, best some one—to **get air, vent, or wind of.** To hear or learn of, to come to the knowledge of

If my old aunt gets wind of it she'll cut me off with a shilling

THACKERAY *Paras Sketch Book*, 32

—**to get along.** To fare, make progress, succeed, as, he gets along well the American equivalent of the English phrase to get on—to **get around.** To outwit, deceive, circumvent, overcome; surpass, beat, excel—to **get at** 1. To go to, reach, attack, find out, as, to get at the man, to get at one's work, to get at the truth. 2. To corrupt (a legislator, etc.) 3. To injure (a horse, dog, etc.), as to prevent its winning a race or a prize. 4. [Eng.] To make sport of, quiz

(2) The legislator can be "got at," the people cannot

BYRNE *American Commonwealth*, II, ii, 78

—**to get away.** To free oneself from, escape, depart

He came out of the Tower, or, rather, got away out of it some way or another

COBBETT *Col. Reg.*, xxxiii, 13

—**to get away with.** [U. S.] To achieve a desired result, succeed in some endeavor, win a contest, get the advantage of—to **get back.** To return—to **get back at.** To retaliate, call to account, also, to satirize

The newspapers are getting back at Sam

*Chicago Inter-Ocean*, 1888

—**to get behind.** To succeed in solving, penetrate, become acquainted with, also, to lag or lose ground—to **get by heart** or **by rote.** To learn so as to repeat word for word, commit to memory

I had got almost all Watts' hymns by heart

MEDWIN *Angler in Wales*, I, 123

Those principles, which you then got, like your grammar rules, only by rote

CHESTERFIELD *Letters*, II, 251

—**to get his.** [U. S.] To get that which one deserves, receive payment, reward or punishment. Sometimes used as **to get his come-uppings.** To receive what is justly due of good or of ill-fortune

Well, I did get my come uppings that time

W. D. HOWELLS *Landlord at Lion's Head* xxi

—**to get home.** To reach one's home, goal, or purpose, hence, to cause to arrive at a spot intended, as, to get home a blow—to **get in.** 1. To arrive at a destination, said of a boat or train. 2. To plant (seeds). 3. To make effective, succeed with, as, to get in a blow. 4. To comprise. 5. *Falconry* To be with the hawk when it has killed its prey. 6. To set type close. 7. To yard stock, yoke cattle, or harness horses

—**to get in behind.** [U. S.] To interrogate in detail, chastise—to **get into.** 1. To enter, hence, to arrive at, reach the point of, as, to get into a rage. 2. To secure entrance, as, he got into society. 3. To put on, vest, dress in, as, to get into one's clothes. 4. To acquire a manner or habit, as of punning. 5. To take up seriously or methodically, as, he got into training—to **get in with.** To become intimate with—to **get it.** To be punished in some way, to be reprimanded or scolded, catch it—to **get it across.** [U. S.] To succeed in one's endeavor, put it over, make one's meaning or message clear.—**to get left.** To fail or be disappointed by reason of

one's own neglect or folly, or, in general, to be disappointed.—to get loose or free. To arrive at an unbound condition, become liberated—to get near. To approach closely—to get next to [U S] To see a thing clearly, understand, to secure the advantage of an enterprise—to get off. 1. To remove, take off 2. To send away; get rid of 3. To secure the acquittal of 4. To utter, as a joke or speech 5. To escape, get clear

The leaders of the insurrection got off much more easily than their followers

CONAN DOYLE *Micah Clarke*

6. To be relieved or freed, as from a duty, penalty, etc 7. To descend or alight, as from a horse 8. To leave, depart, as, the air-ship got off—to get on. 1. To invest oneself with, put on, as a boot or glove 2. To proceed, succeed, fare 3. To mount or enter, as a horse or a vehicle 4. To back a race-horse 5. To harmonize

Cleverness and imposture get on excellently well together.

FROUDE *Hist. Essays, Erasmus and Luther*, p. 63

You can see for yourself that we shouldn't be likely to get on together

ANSTEEY *Tinted Venus*, 36

—to get one's way or ways. To do as one wishes, or to act according to one's pleasure—to get on for, to, or toward To draw near, approach said of time, as, it is getting on for supper-time—to get on one's nerves. To irritate, annoy, haunt one's thoughts—to get on to. To comprehend, after some difficulty, "catch on", "tumble to"—to get on with. To live or work in harmony with, keep on good terms with, as, it is hard to get on with a deceitful man—to get out. 1. To depart, escape, as, he was told to get out 2. To become known, get abroad, as a secret 3. To publish, as, the magazine was got out 4. To express or utter with difficulty, as he finally got out his thanks 5. To learn by questioning, elicit, as, she got out the reason for his action 6. To hedge, as in betting on a race-horse—to get out of. 1. To obtain from 2. To evade or excuse oneself from escape—to get out of bed on the wrong side or way. To be ill-humored or testy the reverse of the old saying, "to rise on the right side"

Some of them had got out of bed on the wrong side *The Globe*, London, May 15, 1890—to get over. 1. To overcome, recover from, get through with, finish; win over, cover (a distance)

She never thoroughly got over this fall, and it doubtless hastened her end

BARING-GOULD *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1888

2. To make clear to; convey, as an idea—to get religion. [U S] To become converted

Captain Underhill killed his neighbor's wife, "and got his religion on a pipe of tobacco"

ELLIOTT *New Eng Hist*, I, 460

We had come to Andover to get religion

J P QUINCY *Figures of the Past*, 6

—to get round. 1. To circumvent, avoid, cajole, evade 2. To be about, to arrive—to get shed, shet or shut of. To be rid of—to get the gate. To be thrown out or dismissed—to get the goods on. [U S] To get evidence of, secure proof—to get there. To accomplish one's purpose—to get there with both feet. To be completely successful, attain one's object

He said as he'd been gambling, and was \$200 ahead of the town *He got there with both feet at starting*

FRANCIS *Saddle and Moccasin*

—to get through with. To complete—to get to. 1. To start, as, to get to telling stories 2. To arrive at, as, to get to the bank—to get together. 1. To collect, assemble, amass, as, to get facts or goods together, to meet, assemble said of persons 2. To come to any agreement—to get under. To put under control, master, suppress, as, the fire was got under promptly—to get up. 1. To prepare and arrange for; stir up, devise, invent, plan, construct, compile 2. To make up, dress, disguise

CHAS MERIVALE *Gen Hist Rome*, p 597.

He was well got up for effect 3. To rise, as from sleep or rest 4. To go higher, ascend 5. To begin to increase or to show movement or violence, as, the storm got up 6. To raise up; cause to be raised, as, to get up the anchor 7. To develop, as, to get up an enthusiasm 8. To regain (something lost), recoup 9. To study for a special reason or by special endeavor 10. To launder 11. To garner, rick 12. *Hunting* To start from cover, flush—to get up and dig, or to get up and dust. [U S] To start to work, get busy—to get up and get. [U S] To clear out, depart—to get wind of. To receive information concerning; hear of accidentally.—to get with child. To cause pregnancy in,

**getaway.** 1. An escape, as of a prisoner from custody, or of a fox from covert. 2. The starting of horses at a race.

**ghastly.** [Brit.] Frightful; hideous; awful; shocking; dreadful; as, his marriage was a *ghastly* failure.—**ghastly grin** or **smile.** A grin or smile, as one on a dead man's face

**ghost.** A shadow or semblance; slight trace; unsubstantial imitation; phantom; as, the *ghost* of a smile.

The result [of confederation] was not a government, but a *ghost*

DEWEY *Orations and Speeches*, Apr. 30, 1889, p. 8  
—not a ghost of a chance. Not the faintest possibility of success —to give up or yield the ghost. To die—to lay or raise the ghost. 1. To decide or cause an argument, cause a ghost to disappear, or to appear. 2. To determine or decide a doubtful matter —the ghost walks. [Theat.] Salaries are being paid

An Actors' Benevolent Fund box placed on the treasurer's desk every day when the *ghost walks* would get many an odd shilling or sixpence put into it

*The Referee*, London, June 24, 1884

A phrase attributed to one of a company of unpaid English strolling players who while rehearsing "Hamlet," said, in answer to Hamlet's speech concerning the Ghost "Perchance 'twill walk again," "No, I'm d—d if the *Ghost walks* until our salaries are paid"

**gib, to hang one's.** To pout.

**gibber-gunnyah.** [Austral.] An aboriginal cave-dwelling.

Our home is the *gibber-gunnyah*,  
Where hill joins hill on high

R. W. VANDERKISTE *Lost but not for Ever*.

**gibble-gabble.** Foolish, idle talk.

**gibe with.** [U. S.] To work harmoniously with, to be in agreement.

**giddy.** Wanton, flighty; hence, to play the giddy goat. [Slang.] To indulge in dissipation; be happy-go-lucky.

**gift-horse in the mouth, to look a.** To pick flaws in or find fault with a gift or favor.

**gift of gab or gift of the gab.** Fluency in speaking.

Our folks will show their *gift of gab* ELIZABETH B. STODDARD *Two Men*, p. 28

**giggle.** I. *n.* A nervous jerky laugh. II. *v.* To laugh in a jerky nervous way; titter.—**giggler.** One given to nervous jerky laughter.

—**giglet.** A giddy or flighty girl a romp, mixx, wanton

**gig-lamps.** 1. Lamps attached to a gig or two-wheeled carriage, hence, in slang phrase, spectacles.

"Looks ferociously mild in his *gig-lamps*" remarked a third, alluding to Mr. Verdant Green's spectacles C. BEDE VERDANT GREEN, III

2. [West Ind.] Fireflies."

Fire flies . . . with two long antennæ, at the point of each of which hangs a blazing lantern The unimaginative colonists call them *gig-lamps*

FROUDE *Eng. West Ind.*, XV

**Gilderoy's kite, higher than.** Very high: an allusion to the exceedingly high gallows on which a notorious Perthshire robber named Patrick McGregor, *alias* Gilderoy was hanged in Edinburgh in July 1638, and from which his body looked like a kite.

**gild the pill.** Present something disagreeable in an attractive way; show the golden side of; gloss over the unpleasant features of by emphasizing apparent advantages.

The inward gratulations of conscience for having done our duties is able to *gild* the bitterest pill. BOYLE *Excell. Theol.*, I, iii, 88.

**gills.** The flesh under and around a person's chin. Used in idiomatic phrases, as: **blue, white, or yellow about the gills.** To be dejected or in a state of fear or in ill health.

He looks a little *yellow about the gills*.

THACKERAY, *Newcomes*.

—**full to the gills.** [Slang.] Very drunk —**red or rosy about the gills.** 1. To be flushed with anger or liquor. 2. To be in fine health.

(1) Anger maketh both the Cheekes and the *Gills red*. BACON *Sylva*, 872.

(2) What a careless, even deportment hath your borrower! what *rosy gills*.

LAMB *Essays of Elia*, 35.

**gilt-edged.** Exceptionally good; of the highest grade or quality; first class; the best of its kind: said of securities, commercial paper, books, etc., in allusion to a fine quality of writing-paper with gilt-edges, formerly in use.

*Gilt-edged* mutton is the latest of the glorified and "boomed" American products.

*The Standard*, London, June 18, 1891.

**gilt off the gingerbread, to take the.** [Brit.] To strip of alluring decoration, as the gilded ornamentation formerly put on gingerbread; to bring down to reality, as by destroying illusions; to discount heavily.

We had a rattling good year all round last, bar the Dancing Master. He *took the gilt off the gingerbread* considerably.

HAWLEY SMART *From Post to Finish*, 171.

**gimcrack.** 1. A showy but useless trifle. 2. A coxcomb; also, a simpleton or silly woman.

I hate these travelers, these *gimcracks* made of mops and motions.

FLETCHER *Wildgoose Chase*, act iii, sc. 1.

**gin<sup>1</sup>.** [Australian.] An aboriginal woman; an old woman: origin obscure, but not in allusion to the spirit of that name.

An Australian settler's wife bestows on some poor slaving *gin* a cast-off French bonnet.

KINGSLEY *Two Years Ago*, xiii.

**gin<sup>2</sup>.** A trap: contraction of *engine*. See quotation.

Traps and snares are everywhere as the Americans and their Allies penetrate the German lines. Commonest is the *gin*, a board set horizontally at the entrance to a dugout, and having the appearance of a seat. But the moment one sits down the board yields a fraction of an inch, just enough for a nail, hidden at the other end, to scratch a charge of explosives, and set it off.

E. M. THIERRY in *The Eve Sun*, Baltimore, Sept. 26, 1918.

**ginger.** [Brit. Slang.] A red-haired person; also, energy and pluck; hence, **to lack or want ginger:** To be lazy and timid.

If father objects, send him to me, I'll take the *ginger* out of him in short order.

GUNTER *Miss Nobody*, 124.

**gingerbread.** [Brit.] Showy but worthless, tinsel, brummagem; in earlier English, money.

**gingerly.** Cautiously or daintily: said of handling something or of walking.

*Gingerly*, as if treading upon eggs, Cuddie began to ascend the well-known pass

SCOTT *Old Mortality* II, 53.

**gingham.** [Brit.] An umbrella, specifically one of gingham, a striped cotton cloth made at Guingamp, in Brittany. Hence, also a *gamp*.

Mr Peters, therefore, took immediate possession by planting his honest *gingham* in a corner of the room.

M. E. BRADDON *Trial of the Serpent*, I, vii.

**gin-mill.** A drinking place; bar; public house; saloon.

**gin-sling.** [U. S.] A drink composed of gin, sugar, and lemon juice, and aerated water.

They were sitting in a cellar kitchen in Grubb street, regaling themselves in drinking *gin-sling* and smoking segars.

Massachusetts *Spy*, July 6, 1800.

**gird<sup>1</sup>.** To bind around, as with a belt, so as to hold in place; hence, to clothe with a garment or endow with authority or power.—**gird oneself.** To brace oneself up for effort or trial, prepare oneself as by fastening one's girdle—**gird the loins or reins.** Prepare, as for a journey or for hard work, by girding one's garments at the waist a Biblical phrase See 2 *Kings* iv, 29.

Then Christian began to *gird up his loins*, and to address himself to his journey.  
BUNYAN *Pilgrim's Progress*, p. 101.

**gird<sup>2</sup>.** I. v. To taunt or rail at; address cutting remarks to; jeer.

Men of all sorts take a pride to *gird* at me. SHAKESPEARE II *Henry IV*, act i, sc. 2.

II. n. A taunt, gibe or sneer.

**girdle, to have or hold under the.** To have in complete control; hold in subjection. Compare BELT.

**give**, which primarily means, to convey to another, and also, to yield, is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **give-and-take.** I. n.

1. Good-natured banter. 2. The making of mutual concessions II. v. 1. To reciprocate, compromise; show willingness to accept what one is disposed to give. Representatives ought to go into council in a *give and take* spirit

*The Melbourne Argus*, March 1, 1897.

2. [Brit Sports] A handicap race—**give-away.** 1. An unconscious self-betrayal. See TO GIVE AWAY, below 2. A game with checkers or chess, in which the object is to force one's adversary to capture men—**give me.** Grant me; commend me to; I am for; I choose; I would rather have

I know not what course others may take; but as for me, *give me* liberty or *give me* death!

PATRICK HENRY's speech in the Virginia Convention, March 23, 1775.  
—**give us a rest.** [U. S.] Cease talking, shut up—to **give a good account of.** To prove (one's) ability, or success in anything; comport (oneself) creditably, win decided commendation for (oneself)—**to give a handle.** To supply an opportunity, or offer a hold—to **give audience.** To listen to attentively, also, grant an interview to—to **give away.** 1. To betray through carelessness or stupidity, hence, to betray in any way

Miss Youghal began crying; and Strickland saw that he had hopelessly *given* himself away, and everything was over. KIPLING *Plain Tales*, *Miss Youghal's Sins*, p. 35.

2. To hand over, or deliver (a bride) at a marriage. 3. To lose by carelessness.

Thy solicitor shall rather die

Than *give* thy cause away

SHAKESPEARE *Othello*, act iii, sc. 3.

—**to give best.** [Austral] To acknowledge the superiority of, as in defeat—to **give birth to.** To originate, be the productive cause of—to **give ear to.** To pay attention to; listen to—to **give forth.** To announce; publish—to **give in.** 1. To assent to or yield, as something demanded 2. To cease opposition; acknowledge oneself vanquished 3. To deliver or hand in (a resignation, report, etc.) to an official.

(2) "You won't *give in*?" said Frederick. "You are just like all women. You will never allow that you are wrong"

MRS OLIPHANT *Innocent*, II, ii, 36

—**to give it to.** To scold or reprove, also, to punish, as by flogging—to **give line or rope to.** To grant freedom to the length of a line or rope Hence, to **give one line or rope enough to hang himself.** To allow to proceed freely until one becomes entangled, as in a rope.—**to give on or upon.** To furnish an opening or vista; open; lead. a Gallicism

Then slept a buxom hostess forth, and sail'd,

Full-blown, before us into rooms which *gave*

Upon a pillar'd porch

TENNYSON *Princess*, i, st. 12.

—**to give oneself airs.** To assume an arrogant or superior attitude; put on airs.—**to give oneself up.** 1. To surrender oneself, as to a court of law 2. To despair of oneself, abandon hope. 3. To yield (to)—**to give one's hand.** 1. To present one's hand to be clasped as a token of friendship or confidence 2. To wed; said of women.

—**to give (one) the lie.** To denounce (one) as a liar—to **give out.** 1. To send forth; emit. 2. To serve out or distribute. 3. To report; publish; represent or pretend to be.

(1) Vegetables *give out* vital air when exposed to solar light and in contact with water.

SIR H DAVY in BEDDOES *Contrib. to Phys. and Med.*

- (3) Not quite so young as she *gives out*. JOHN STRANGE WINTER *Mrs. Bob*, II, xii.  
 4. To cease from exertion on account of exhaustion; also, to become used up or exhausted

The torches *gave out*, and the party was left in utter darkness

W. G SIMS *Eutaw*, 37.

The gold *gave out*, and it strikes me that the necessity for the mint has gone with it  
 MR TOOMBS of Georgia, speech in the U S Senate, Feb 22, 1859

- [5. To fail, as, the supply of provisions *gave out* 6. To fail to work, act, or operate, as a machine or a part of a machine 7. To announce a public meeting, a church service, etc.; to read the number or the words of a chant, hymn, etc., to a congregation — to *give over*. 1. To cease to act. 2. To abandon (an undertaking, etc.), desist from.

(2) Their fleet being almost annihilated, they *gave over* their piracies.

RANKEN *Hist France*, I, 345

3. To make over to 4. To cease treating because incurable: said of a patient or disease 5. To yield (oneself) to

Oxford is *given over* to heretical depravity. ROGERS *Hist Gleanings*, ser II  
 —to *give place* to. To yield to —to *give points*. 1. To concede, terms.  
 2. To offer information or advice —to *give rise* to. To cause or produce, result in —to *give the glad hand* to. To welcome, receive cordially. —to *give the lie*. To denounce as untruthful, or to show to be false. Compare TO GIVE ONE THE LIE —to *give the slip* to. To escape from.

But it is ordinary for those that have professed themselves his servants, often, to *give him the slip* and return again to me

BUNYAN *Pilgrim's Progress*, p 115.

—to *give tongue*. To bark said by huntsmen, of hounds —to *give up*. 1. To lose all heart, cease to strive, abandon expectation of or hope concerning, as, illness compelled him to *give up* work, we *gave up* our expected guest, the physician *gave up* the patient 2. To make public, divulge, as a secret 3. To relinquish, as, the sea *gave up* its dead 4. To addict oneself to, as, he *gave himself up* to the study of philology 5. To make personal sacrifices —to *give way*. 1. To break or fall; as, the bridge *gave way* 2. To withdraw, as, the crowd *gave way* 3. To begin rowing usually in the imperative, as a command to a boat's crew, meaning to give headway to the boat 4. To cease objecting or contending, make way for 5. To lose one's self-control; to break down or become shattered said of health, the mind, etc. 6. [Stock Exchange] To drop in price

**gizzard.** Colloquially, the insides or stomach of a person.

I find my wife has something in her *gizzard* that only waits an opportunity of being provoked to bring up

PEPYS *Diary*, June 17, 1668.

—to *fret one's gizzard*. To harass with care and anxiety; worry, fume and fret; vex oneself with —to *stick in one's gizzard*. To be unpleasant and offensive, as something difficult to digest or get rid of, stick in one's craw.

**Glasgow magistrate.** [Brit.] A fine red herring.

**glass, the.** Strong drink.

Drink not *the third glass*, which thou canst not tame, when once it is within thee.

GEORGE HERBERT *The Temple*.

**glass-house, to live in a.** To be open to attack or to adverse criticism.

From the proverb "Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones," which in 1664 was rendered by the French:

"Qui à sa maison de verre,  
 Sur le voisin ne jette pierre "

*Proverbes en Rimes.*

**glim.** [Brit.] A candle, lantern, light or fire; hence, to **douse the glim.**

To put out the light.

Sure enough they left their *glim* here

STEVENSON *Treasure Island*, 89.

**globe-trotter.** [U. S.] A great traveler.

"I have been in every civilized country on earth," said the *globe-trotter*, "and would you believe it, I have met only two really intelligent women." "Two!" echoed the beautiful widow in surprise, "why, who was the other?"

*The Daily News*, Chicago, Feb., 1909.



**Glorious Fourth.** [U. S.] Independence Day, July 4.

I say, ole boy, it ain't the *Glorious Fourth*,  
You'd oughta larned 'fore this wut talk wuz worth

LOWELL *Biglow Papers*, 2d series, 2.

**glout.** [Eng.] To stare; gaze; to look sulky; pout. Used also as,  
**to be in a glout.**

There are some people who find a sort of gloomy pleasure in *glouting*

SHENSTONE *Essays*, 212.

**glove** is used in the following idiomatic phrases:—**to bite one's glove.**

To give signs of enmity or hatred.

Stern Rutherford right little said

But *bit his glove*, and shook his head SCOTT *Lady of the Lake*, vi, 7.

—**to handle or treat without gloves.** To deal with severely or roughly

The prophets and practitioners of the naturalistic school are here *handled without gloves*

*The Nation*, New York, May 5, 1892.

—**to put on the gloves.** To assume a defensive attitude —**without gloves.** Without ceremony or apology.

**glut.** To fill or supply to excess; stuff; gorge; sate; as, to *glut* the market.

Arise, ye Goths, and *glut* your ire.

BYRON *Childe Harold*, can. 4, st. 141.

**go** is used idiomatically in the following phrases: **a go.** A turn of affairs; piece of business. Used also with a qualifying word, as, **a capital go**, **a pretty go**, **a rum go**, etc., to mean a fine, striking or odd piece of business —**from the word go.** From the outset; thoroughly.—**go ahead.** Get to work; proceed; make a beginning

*Go ahead* is of American origin, and is used . . . where the British would say "all right" *National Encyclopedia*.

—**go along.** Go or get on: often used commandingly, meaning get away

—**go-as-you-please.** With freedom of action; not restricted to rule. used of races in which competitors may run, rest, or walk, at will

Most of these long distance matches are now of the *go-as-you-please* class

*Century Magazine*, 1890, 207.

—**go away back and sit down.** [U. S.] Take a seat at the rear and keep still  
—**go back of or behind.** Try to get at the antecedent facts, investigate the authority for a statement

The fraud involved in these returns was so manifest that it was absolutely necessary to *go behind them*

MR. RAYNER, of North Carolina, speech in House of Representatives, Dec 18, 1839.

—**go back on.** [U. S.] Turn against one's allies or friends.—**go bail for.** Act as surety for: used colloquially

He won't marry her now, *I'll go bail*

HAGGARD *Dawn*, LXXXV.

—**go by the board.** Be completely destroyed; be razed to the deck and washed overboard.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,

With the masts, *went by the board*

LONGFELLOW *Wreck of the Hesperus*.

—**go down.** Be accepted as true; or received favorably, as, that story did not *go down* with me —**go for.** 1. Start to leave or depart for a place or thing. 2. Support or be in favor of 3. Assail verbally or physically

(1) I may have the satisfaction of embracing you before I *go for* Holland

MARLBOROUGH *Letters and Despatches*, I, 244.

(2) I *go for* the navy, because I am interested in its success and efficiency

MR. BLACK, of Georgia, speech in House of Representatives, May 24, 1842.

—**go farther or further and fare worse.** Be in a worse position after strong efforts at betterment

BRET HARTE *Poems*.

Go tell a tradesman he deceives . . . and he will answer . . . *go further on, you will be cheated worse*

J. STEPHENS *Satyr* *Essays*, 26.

—**go in for.** Urge, favor, or support with energy —**go it.** [Brit.] Indulge in a spree; trot at a lively pace, speed up

I am going to *go it* a bit before I settle down I have *gone it* a bit already, and I am going to *go it* a bit more.

HENRY J. BYRON *Our Boys*, act i.

—**go it alone.** Act independently, play the game single-handed a phrase borrowed from euchre —**go it blind.** [U S] Bet without looking at one's hand, hence, to act without consideration See also under **BLIND**

O little city gals, don't never *go it*  
*Blind* on the word o' noospaper or poet!

LOWELL Baylow Papers, 2d series, 6

—**go it one (or more) better.** [U S] Take greater risk than a predecessor. a phrase used in poker indicating that one player, who sees the amount of a previous wager, or wagers, and raises it or bets higher

The incident illustrates once more the way in which the battleship obsession still maintains its hold Argentina has to see the Brazilian navy and *go it one or two better*

*The Evening Post*, New York, Feb 28, 1910

—**go off.** 1. To explode, as a gun 2. To run its course; occur in some specified manner, as, the concert *went off* well 3. To decline, deteriorate, as, the market has *gone off* two points 4. To pass into unconsciousness; also, to fail to eventuate, fall through, not to keep, as an agreement 5. To marry

(1) The piece *went off* in the awkward hands of the poor clergyman

SCOTT Guy Mannering, xxx.

(2) The whole thing, as the carpenter said, *went off* pretty well

MARIA EDGEWORTH *Popular Tales, Lame Jervas*

(5) Plain girls . . . sometimes did *go off* when pretty ones hung on hand

MRS HOUSTOUN *Caught in Snare*, I, xii.

—**go out.** 1. To die away, fade from sight or existence, as, the fire *goes out*

Art after art *goes out*, and all is night

POPE *Dungrad*, IV.

2. To go into society 3. To be drawn forth in sympathy; as, my heart *went out* to her

4. To work away from home, to *go out* housecleaning 5. To resign, surrender office, as, the administration *went out* 6. To ebb, as the tide, also, to be published abroad

7. To terminate, as a month or year 8. To strike, as, the street-car men *went out*; also, in baseball, cricket, etc., to be put out 9. To become obsolete, said of fashions

10. At Cambridge University, to take the degree of Bachelor of Arts 11. To engage in a duel

—**go out of one's way.** To do something as a favor or an accommodation, take extra pains or trouble for some one —**go the whole hog.** [U S] To get all that can be had, have all that is offered, do thoroughly, go through item by item, of a bill of fare a phrase popular in Andrew Jackson's campaign, the origin of which is credited by T. Hamilton ("Men and Manners in America" i, 17-18) to Virginia.

—**go through.** Complete something undertaken or entered upon, also, plunder thoroughly

They said, let us *go through* him And they *went through* him

MARK TWAIN *New Pilgrim's Progress*, IX.

—**go to all lengths.** Employ every means, use every effort —**go to grass, Bath, Halifax, Jericho, Putney, Tunbridge, etc.** Used imperatively to desire one's room rather than his company

Away, good Sampson, you *go to grass* instantly!

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER *Little French Lawyer*.

She may *go to Tunbridge*, or she may *go to Bath* or she may *go to Jericho* for me

THACKERAY *Virginians*, xvi.

—**go to it.** [U S] Get busy, act at once an exhortation to do something promptly.

—**go to the bad.** Become a wreck, follow an evil course —**go to the dogs.** Go to ruin See also under **DOGS**

The service, he said, would *go to the dogs*, and might for anything be cared

A TROLLOPE *Three Clerks*, I.

—**go to the wall.** Be forced to yield, be pressed or driven to an extremity. Everybody must *go to the wall* who cannot serve that interest

North American Review, 1887.

—**go under.** Fail as in business, become bankrupt, also, give up, succumb, die

He had "*gone under*" in the struggle, as the terribly expressive phrase is

H C HALLIDAY *Some One Must Suffer*

—**go up.** 1. Become bankrupt 2. Disappear from society a euphemism for, be sent to prison —**go with the stream.** Follow the general drift or current of thought, opinion, custom, etc. opposed to *against the stream* —**go without saying.** Be taken for granted, be accepted without the need of any explanation —**great go.** [Cambridge, Eng.] The final examinations for degrees at the University, where *little go* is the

preliminary examinations—**no go**. Of no use or avail, a failure—**on the go**. In action, on the move, astr—**plenty of go**. Full of energy, dash and spirit—to **make a go of it**. [U. S.] To make a success of a thing, bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion—**go without saying**. Be taken for granted, be accepted without the need of any explanation

That such accusations were not only utterly false, but were beneath contempt,  
*goes without saying.* *All the Year Round*, 1887.

**goat, to get one's.** [U. S.] To make angry; annoy or irritate. *Goat* is perhaps a contraction of *goatee*, the chin-tuft worn by Uncle Sam.

**goat, to play the.** [Brit.] To act as a fool; also, to **play the giddy goat**, as an intensifier.

**goat, to ride the.** To be initiated in a secret society, this act, in the belief of non-members, being part of the initiatory ceremonies.

**gob.** [U. S.] A sailor in the American Navy. It has been claimed that the term came into use about 1912, and is believed to have originated on the China coast, but it has been in use in Great Britain for many years where it indicates the revenue men, that is, the men engaged in the preventive service—that branch of the customs service charged with the suppression of smuggling

Its application is universal, and when one American blue-jacket speaks either of himself or of another in the service he invariably says *gob*

S. G. BLYTHE *Sat Eve Post*, Sept. 21, 1918.

*Gobs, gob-ships and gobbie-ships* are known in Scottish dialect, and in the dialects of Northamptonshire, Warwickshire, Shropshire, Huntingdonshire and Somersetshire; there is a verb "to gob," which means "to stop." It also means "to exporate." Dwelly, in his "Gaelic Dictionary," reminds us that a *gob* is the pee bill, or point of an anchor—that is, the part beyond the fluke. A *gob* in England is a coastguard. Coastguards are all sailors in active service or in the naval reserve

"The Scotsman" for Aug. 4, 1890, says that when a meeting of the coast guard takes place the men indulge in protracted yarns, a draw of the pipe and a friendly chew. Such a session is invariably productive of a considerable amount of good-natured banter, as well as free expectoration all around, wherefrom our friends came to be known as *gobbies* (from *gob* in the mouth). In the process of time *gob* and *gobbie* came to be applied to the ships manned by the *gobs*

**go-by, give one the.** Forget, pass over, or ignore a person; also, dodge; avoid.

We may *give him the go-by* by running through the Needles

MARRYAT *Midshipman Easy*, xxxviii.

**god.** One who sits in the gallery of a theater: in allusion to the gods of Olympus. The name is said to have been given by David Garrick and suggested by the flying Cupids painted on a sky-blue ground on the ceiling of Drury Lane theater, London, where he played.

The gallery was quite full . . . One young *god*, between the acts, favored the public with a song.

THACKERAY *Irish Sketch-Book*, XXVII.

**godown.** A Chinese or East Indian warehouse.—**go-down.** 1. A drink of liquor. 2. A cut, as in the bank of a stream, to make an approach for animals to the water.

**gods, a sight for the.** Something out of the common; anything that excites admiration.

Stringy Bark, prepared to greet his native land, was a *sight for the gods* to behold with satisfaction

HUME NISBET *Bushranger's Sweetheart*, 31.

**God's acre.** A burying-ground; a churchyard.

I like that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls the burial place *God's Acre*. It is just  
LONGFELLOW *God's Acre*.

**God's footstool.** The earth.

**going.** [Sports.] The condition of a track, road or path; as, the *going* was bad.

**gold.** Precious, pure, or genuine, as a heart of *gold*; she is pure *gold*.

**gold digger.** 1. A prospector. 2. [U. S.] A woman who lives by her wits or who preys on the opposite sex.

**golden age.** See under AGE.

**golden bowl is broken, the.** All illusions are dispelled; life is at end and "man goeth to his long home."

Or ever the silver cord be loosed or *the golden bowl be broken*, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it

*Ecclesiastes, XII, 6.*

**golden calf.** See under CALF.

**golden rose.** A rose of wrought gold, blessed by the Pope on Lætare or Rose Sunday, and usually presented to some Roman Catholic sovereign as a high honor, and in recognition of particular services rendered to the papal see. It has been conferred upon cities, churches, and states, as well as individuals. The custom of giving the rose antedates the year 1050.

**golden rule.** 1. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (*Matthew* vii, 12).

In our dealings with each other we should be guided by the *Golden Rule*

HOWELLS *Silas Latham, II, xiv.*

2. In mathematics, the Rule of Three.

The Rule of Three is often called the *Golden Rule*.

HUTTON *Course Math I, 44*

**gondola.** 1. A cabined passenger-boat used in the Canals of Venice, commonly propelled by one man standing at the stern with a single oar. In parts of the United States, any flat-bottomed small boat.

Vessels are floated down to the sea, by means of flat boats or lighters here [northern U. S.] called *gondolas*

KENDALL *Travels, III, lxiv.*

2. [U. S.] A railway platform car, sideless or with low sides. 3. [Brit.] A hansom-cab.

**gone** is used in the following idiomatic phrases:—**gone case** or **man**.

A person in a hopeless condition.—**gone coon.** See under COON.  
—**to be gone on.** To be in love with or infatuated by

He was a fine fellow and no mistake And was *gone on* Lady Lorrimer!

JOHN STRANGE WINTER *That Imp, 44.*

**goner.** [U. S.] Past recovery; done for; utterly ruined.

He exclaimed, "*She's a goner!*" . . . There, to be sure, she lay perfectly dead

THOREAU *Maine Woods, 365.*

**gonof, gonoph.** A pickpocket; an expert thief.

He's as obstinate a young *gonoph* as I know.

DICKENS *Bleak House, XIX.*

**good** is used for "God" in **good-by** which is a corruption of "God be with you," and for "Holy" in **Good Friday**. Its significance varies in other phrases.—**as good as.** 1. To all intents and purposes, practically 2. Measuring up to the quality of (something else); equal to.—**as good as gold.** Very good genuine, sound.—**as good as a play.** As amusing and entertaining as a theatrical performance said of an exchange of pleasantries, a smart speech, wit or jest.—**as good as his word.** Equaling in fulfilment all promised.—**as good as pie.** [U. S.]

Very good, well-behaved —for good, or for good and all. Finally, to close the matter, for the last time

He [Sydney Smith] left Edinburgh for good in 1803, when the education of his pupils was completed *Edinburgh Review*, XXII, 177.

I'll not kiss, till I kiss you for good and all *Acad. of Compliments*  
—good cheap. See under CHEAP —good-for. [S. Africa] A document stating that it is good for a specified amount, a promissory note —good for anything. Fit for any sort of work —good graces. Favorable regard, good will, friendship. Usually, in one's good graces. —good gracious! An exclamation of astonishment sometimes rendered goodness gracious! —good grief! An exclamation of deprecation expressing regret or disapproval —good hater. One who is implacable in his dislikes —good lady. The maternal head of a household, a wife. Also, goodwife. See quotation below —goodman. Husband, the paternal head of a household

When the goodman mends his armor

And trims his helmet's plume,

When the goodwife's shuttle merrily

Goes flashing through the loom *MACAULAY Horatius*, st 70

**good night! good morning!** Phrases used with meanings widely apart from those of salutation. *Good night* in modern British usage is a retort to a delightful piece of news, or to an incredible statement. In the United States it means it's all over, that ends it, as it did in Shakespeare's time. In this latter sense the phrase *good morning* is used more generally in Great Britain.

Dynamite on Hip, Mule Kicks Him; *Good Night!*

Headline in New York *Tribune*, Jan 3, 1921.

When anything's upon my heart, *good-morning* to my head, it's not worth a lemon.

MARIA EDGEWORTH

If he fall in, *good night!* or sink or swim *SHAKESPEARE I Henry IV*, act. 1, sc 3

—good old. [Brit.] A familiar mode of address followed by either a given or surname

—good Samaritan. A humane, compassionate person so named after the good Samaritan of the parable in *Luke* x —good sort. A good-natured and reasonable man, a pleasant fellow, one of sound qualities, a friendly companionable man

Had we not better make a clean breast of it, and trust to his generosity, he seems a *good sort* *HUME NISBET Bushranger's Sweetheart*, 149.

—good thing. 1. Something worth having 2. A sure tip on the races 3. Some one to whom one can turn for help —in good time. At the opportune moment —to be as good as one's word. To keep one's promises

I doubt not but I shall be as good as my word for your money

CROMWELL in CARLYLE's *Lett and Sp*, App 11

—to be played for a good thing. [U. S.] To be imposed on —to do a good turn. To do an act of kindness to —to have a good time. To enjoy oneself, make merry, to be fortunate or lucky

I went and had as good a time as heart could wish. *PEPPY'S Diary* March 7, 1666  
—to make good. 1. To fulfil, perform, as a promise 2. To verify or establish as a statement, accusation 3. To supply a deficiency —to stand good for To be ready to do or capable of doing something —to the good. To one's credit or in one's favor, as, your bank account is \$120 to the good —to think good. To deem expedient or wise

**goods, the.** [U. S.] The thing bargained for; the quid pro quo, evidence or proof.

New York does not want to buy a charter "if and when", she desires a look at the actual goods, so that she may know exactly what she is getting

*Evening Post* New York Sept 18, 1911

—to deliver the goods. To give evidence of one's ability to do what one claims oneself able to do

**goody<sup>1</sup>, a.** Mawkishly good; namby-pamby.

I quite agree with Strabo that there can be no great poet who is not a good man, though not, perhaps, a goody man *COLERIDGE Table Talk*, Aug 20, 1833.

**goody<sup>2</sup>, n.** 1. A sweetmeat; bon-bon; also a cake or bun. 2. An officiously pious or weakly religious person. 3. An old woman in humble life; as, *Goody Smith*. 4. In Harvard University, a chambermaid.

**goody-goody.** Same as GOODY, 1.

The only remedy is to bribe them with *goody-goodies*.

SWIFT *Directions to Servants*.

**gooseberry** is used idiomatically in the following terms: **gooseberry.**

[Brit.] A fictitious piece of news.—**gooseberry-picker.** [Brit.] A chaperon, one who "plays propriety" with a pair of lovers.

He had a sort of "don't mind me" way with him that made him quite the perfection of a *gooseberry-picker*. J. PAYNE *Mystery of Mirbridge*, III, xl.

—**gooseberry season.** [Brit.] The summer's period of dullness in news, corresponding to dog-days in the United States, the silly season —**old gooseberry.** [Brit.]

1. The dickens or the deuce. Usually in the phrase to **play old gooseberry with.**

I'll *play old gooseberry with* the office, and make you glad to buy me out at a good high figure. DICKENS *Martin Chuzzlewit*, XXXVIII.

A great gale . . . played *old gooseberry with* the boats.

RONALD GOWER *My Reminiscences*, II, xxvii.

2. An elderly fussy person, a fogey —**to play gooseberry.** [Brit.] 1. To act the part of a chaperon. 2. To interfere in one's affairs so as to make a mess of them; in allusion to **gooseberry-fool**, mashed stewed gooseberries.

**goose egg.** [U. S.] Naught, the figure 0: said in baseball, when the team at bat scores no runs.

**goose-flesh or skin.** The creeps; tingling of the skin caused as by fear or cold.

**goose hangs high, the.** [U. S.] The prospect is good; everything is favorable: perhaps a corruption of "the goose *honks* high" as in fair weather.

**goose-step.** 1. The German military step in which the foot is sufficiently elevated to give a 22-inch stride. 2. The act of marking time with the feet. In British drill a setting-up exercise in which the recruit stands on one leg, swinging the other backward and forward without taking a step: now obsolete.

**Gopher.** [U. S.] A resident of Minnesota.—**gopher.** [U. S.] 1. A rat-like burrowing animal. 2. A ground-squirrel. 3. A land-tortoise that burrows at night. 4. A snake.

**Gordian knot, to cut.** To solve a difficulty in a bold or unusual manner. The Gordian knot was tied by King Gordius of Gordium, in Phrygia, and the oracle having declared that whoever untied it should rule Asia, Alexander of Macedon cut it with his sword.

**Gorgonzola Hall.** The New Hall of the London Stock Exchange: so called from the color of the marble; also, the Exchange itself.

**gospel.** Anything received as absolutely true, as **gospel truth.**

It was true as *gospel*.

Every *gospel truth* strikes at some sin and thereby may be discerned

N. GOULD *Double Event*, 175.

TRAPP *Comment on Titus*, ii, 12.

**gossoon.** [Irish.] A lad or boy; from the Irish *garsan* or *garsun*, a corruption of the French *garçon*.

**Gotham.** 1. A village proverbial for the folly of its inhabitants; hence, New York City: so named by Washington Irving in *Salmagundi*, 1807. 2. Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Let the great monarch ass through *Gotham* bray.

FALCONER *Demog.*, 48.

**go-to-meeting.** [U. S.] Suitable to be worn to church, as clothing; hence, best.

One of those blue-noses, with his *go-to-meeting-clothes* on.

HALIBURTON *The Clockmaker*, I, ix.

**Gourock ham.** [Brit.] A herring, either salted or smoked.

**gowk.** A fool, blockhead, or simpleton.

They make April *gowks* of you Cockneys every month in the year

SCOTT *Fortunes of Nigel*, XXXV.

**goy.** [Hebrew.] Any one not a Jew; hence, **Shabbas goy**, a Gentile who lights fires and performs other tasks not lawful for Jews on the Sabbath—**goyyim**. Gentiles

**grab-all.** 1. A rapacious person.

Robert Grier of Lag, who was a very *grab-all* among them

CROCKETT *Men of the Moss Hags*, 163.

2. [Brit.] A bag to carry odds and ends; a carry-all.

—**grab-bag.** 1. A bag from which various articles may be drawn at random on payment of a sum for every drawing or *grab*: a scheme employed to obtain money at charitable sales or fairs. 2. Any source of uncertain and questionable profit, spoils, or grabs; as, the bill just introduced is a mere *grab-bag*.

**grab-game.** 1. Any rapacious procedure in politics or commerce.

In earlier usage, a disturbance started during the progress of a game to permit confederates to seize the stakes and decamp. 2. A form of entertainment popular at church fairs in which a *grab-bag* is used

(1) The selfishness of mankind as illustrated by the universal *game of grab*

BESANT *Ivory Gate*, 236

**grace, the means of.** The opportunity to obtain the favor of God or of hearing the Gospel.

By *means of grace* I understand outward signs, words, or actions ordained of God, to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men sanctifying grace

JOHN WESLEY *Works*, vol V, p 187.

**grace, the throne of.** The Mercy-seat to which prayers are addressed.

**grace, to say.** To invoke a blessing before beginning a meal.

Long *graces* do

But keep good stomachs off that would fall to

SUCKLING *Poems*

**grace, with a bad.** With ill-concealed reluctance.

I submit with the worst *grace* possible.

DICKENS *Letters*, II, 81.

**grace, with a good.** With apparent willingness

Henry retired with a *good grace* from an impossible position

FROUDE *History of England*, I, i, 35.

**gracious!, good.** An exclamation of astonishment. See **GOOD**.

The expression is used in various forms as: *By Gracious! Good gracious! Goodness gracious! Gracious me! My gracious!*

**graft.** 1. [U. S. Politics.] Illegal commission or profit obtained through private influences or political power. 2. Any irregular or unlawful means of support. 3. [Brit.] Work or employment. American usage now employs the word in connection with that which is adventitiously acquired or illicit profits of any kind, from petty thievery to a financial transaction involving millions

**grafter.** An unscrupulous person who preys on the people either against the law or under the law; a swindler or dishonest person.

The boodler sells his official vote or buys official acts contrary to the law. He is a *grafter*, but a *grafter* is not necessarily a boodler. Grafting may or may not be unlawful

It is either a special privilege exercised contrary to law or one the law itself may give. Gov Jos W Folk in *The Evening Post*, New York, Nov. 23, 1905, p. 8

**grand, to do the.** [Brit.] To put on airs.

**Grange, National.** [U. S.] A secret organization of farmers, otherwise known as the **Order of Patrons of Husbandry**, and designed to promote agricultural interests and to bring producer and consumer together without the middleman's intervention.

**grangerize.** To insert in a book illustrations not expressly prepared for it, to extra-illustrate, hence **grangerite**, one who grangerizes.

In 1769 James *Granger* published a "Biographical History of England," with blank leaves for the reception of engraved portraits or other pictorial illustrations of the text.

MURRAY *New English Dictionary*.

—**grangerism.** The practise of extra-illustrating a book.

*Grangerism*, as the innocent may need to be told, is the pernicious vice of cutting plates and title-pages out of many books to illustrate one book

*The Saturday Review*, London, Jan. 27, 1883.

**grass.** 1. Asparagus: a provincialism or cant term. 2. [U. S.] Mint.—**go to grass.** 1. [U. S.] Go, and be hanged to you! get out! always imperatively. 2. [Brit.] Be knocked down, fall or come to the ground —**grass never grows again where his horse has trod.** The devastation and annihilation, as of a conquered region, is so complete that even the soil can not recover its verdure. An expression ascribed to Attila, King of the Huns, whose hordes overran Europe in A. D. 451. Used figuratively to indicate total extinction.

**grass-widow.** 1. [U. S.] A woman abandoned by or separated or divorced from her husband; also, one temporarily separated from her husband.

*Grass widows* in the hills are always writing to their husbands when you drop in upon them

LANG *Wand Ind.*, 4

2. [Prov. Eng.] An unmarried woman who is a mother. Hence, a woman who has slept on the grass or has had grass or straw for bedding, a discarded mistress.

The origin of this term has been erroneously traced to *grass widow*, with which it is not in any way connected. Originally *grass-widow* was a euphemism for a woman who lived with one or more men at different times. *widow* in this use meaning "woman."

—**to give grass.** To yield, surrender —**to hunt grass.** To seek a soft spot on which to fall as in anticipation of a defeat —**to let grass grow under the feet.** To idle away one's time by inaction, neglect one's opportunities.

The King answered that he had not come to Ireland to let the grass grow under his feet.

MACAULAY *History of England*, III, 619.

**gray-back.** [U. S.] 1. A Confederate soldier; from the color of his uniform.

Yonder loitering *gray-back*, leading his horse to water

T. W. HIGGINSON *Army Life*, 152.

2. Confederate paper money. 3. A cootie or body-louse.

**gray mare.** A wife that rules her husband; a masterful married woman: in allusion to the proverb, "The *gray mare* is the better horse," which dates back to Heywood (1546).

The *gray-mare* may keep[down] the husband who chose her, but she can not restrain her growing-up sons

CHARLOTTE M. YONGE *Womankind*, xxii, 183.

**gray of the dawn or morning.** The dawn of day; the cold sunless light of dawning day.

Glimmering through the uncertain *grey of dawn*

E. B. BROWNING *Aurora Leigh*, vii, 1, 489.

**greased lightning, like.** [U. S.] Very quickly; with utmost speed.

**Greaser.** [U. S.] A Mexican: an opprobrious term.

*Greasers*—Californian slang for a mixed race of Mexicans and Indians

BRET HARTE *Carquinez Woods*, VII, Note.



**grease the palm.** To use money in bribing; corrupt; bribe, also, to tip.

In Persia, justice, though at times very blind, is never slow unless her *palm is greased*  
C J WILLS *Modern Persia*, 294

**Great Cæsar! Great Cæsar's Ghost!** An exclamation of surprise equivalent to *Great Scott*.

**Great Divide.** See under **DIVIDE**.

**Great Guns!** An exclamation of astonishment or minced oath, in the same class with *Great Scott* q. v. and *Great Cæsar*. See also under **GUN**—**blow great guns and small arms.** See under **BLOW**

**Great Scott!** [U. S.] An exclamation of surprise, and a substitute for an oath.

Possibly a memory of the name of Gen Winfield Scott, a presidential candidate whose dignity and style were such as to win him the nickname "Fuss and Feathers"

FARMER AND HENLEY *Slang and its Analogues*

**great unwashed.** The rabble, the poorer classes; so stigmatized by Burke.

We begin to understand what is meant by the lowest classes, the *great unwashed*  
SYDNEY WATSON *Wops the Way*, III

**Grecian bend.** See under **BEND**.

He likes a smart young woman with a *Grecian bend*

*Cornhill Magazine*, Dec., 1886.

**Greek.** A language not commonly understood; hence **it's all Greek to me.** It is not intelligible to me; I do not understand it.

CASSIUS. Did Cicero say anything?

CASCA: Ay, he spoke Greek

CASSIUS: To what effect?

CASCA: Nay, an I tell you that I'll ne'er look you in the face again, but those that understood him smiled at one another and shook their heads, but, for mine own part, *it was Greek to me.*

SHAKESPEARE *Julus Cæsar*, act 1, sc 2

—**Greek gift.** A treacherous gift in allusion to Vergil's line (*Æneid* II, 49), "I fear the Greeks when bringing gifts"—**when Greek meets Greek.** When equal and great forces compete (a hard contest is to be expected). Derived from lines in Nathaniel Lee's *Alexander the Great*, "When Greeks joined Greeks, then was the tug of war," an allusion to the contest between the Greek states and Philip and Alexander of Macedon, 357-355 B C.

**green** is used idiomatically in the following phrases.—**green as a gooseberry.** Immature in age or judgment; easily imposed on; young and inexperienced. Sometimes also rendered **green as grass**, or **a cucumber**.—**green-eyed.** Jealous, having green eyes

Sir Lycias now

Must have the *green eye* set in his head. HOOD *Lamia*, V, 278.

—**the green-eyed monster.** Jealousy, envy

O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;

It is the *green-eyed monster*, which doth mock

The meat it feeds on.

SHAKESPEARE *Othello*, act iii, sc. 3

—**green hand.** A new employee; a raw workman a greenhorn—to see any **green in one's eye.** To see signs of inexperience or gullibility used interrogatively in an ironical sense.

Sergeant, do you *see any green in my eye?*

BLACKMORE *Perlycross*, 189.

**Greenback Party, Greenbackers.** [U. S. Pol.] A minority party which came into being and died during the Reconstruction period following the Civil War. It favored an inflated issue of *greenbacks* (q. v.).

**Greenbacks.** [U. S.] Paper money; so called from the color of the back which is printed in green ink. The name was invented by Salmon P. Chase, when Secretary of the Treasury, but was never employed for gold certificates, called "yellow boys," also from the color of the ink.

**green-goods.** [U. S.] Counterfeit greenbacks; hence, **green-goods man**, one who makes or deals in counterfeit greenbacks.

In his opinion, Stillman Myth and Co. were in the *greengoods* business.

GUNTER *Miss Nobody of Nowhere.*

**greenhorn.** An inexperienced person; one unfamiliar with local customs; specifically, in the domestic service, one who has had no practical training in her duties, from young cattle or deer or other horned animal with immature horns.

**Green Isle.** Ireland from its luxurious verdure. Green is also the emblematic color of Ireland; the distinctive color of the Irish Nationalists.

What colour should be seen

Where our fathers' homes have been

But our own immortal *greent*

*The Shan Van Vocht*

**Green Mountain boys.** Natives of Vermont, the **Green Mountain State**.

I am a *green mountain boy* I was born in the State of Vermont.

BRIGHAM YOUNG *Journal of Discovery* I, 362

**greenroom.** The common waiting-room for performers in a theater: so called because originally decorated in green. Hence to talk

**greenroom.** To exchange theatrical gossip.

**greyhound.** A fast ocean steamer.

**grill.** 1. To subject to severe cross-examination; as, the counsel *grilled* the witness mercilessly. 2. To question minutely; hence, to treat harshly or with severity.

**grin and bear it.** To smile in the face of adversity; suffer the consequences, as of an act, without complaining.—**to grin like a Cheshire cat.** See CHESHIRE CAT

**grind.** To work or study laboriously; drudge.—**to grind one's teeth.** To show irritation, anger, disappointment or disgust

The knight changed colour and *grinded his teeth* with rage. SCOTT *Monastery* XXI

—**to grind the face of.** To oppress or tyrannize over

What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and *grind the faces* of the poor  
*Isaiah* iii, 15.

Richelieu was *grinding the faces* of the poor by exorbitant taxation

ISAAC D'ISRAELI *Curiousities of Literature* 306

—**to have an ax to grind.** See under **AX** (p. 20).

**grindstone, to bring, hold, keep or put one's nose to the.** To subject oneself to arduous labor.

A man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, *keep his nose* to the grindstone

FRANKLIN *Mazims in Poor Richard's Almanac* 1757

**Gringo.** A foreigner; one who can not speak Spanish: used as a contemptuous epithet.

The word is commonly believed to have originated in Mexico during the Mexican War of 1846-48, from the refrain of Burns' song then popular in the United States Army "Green grow the rushes O," but it antedates the Mexican War. According to the "Diccionario Castellano" of P. Esteban de Terreros y Pando (Madrid), *gringo* was a common word in Spain in 1787, for in volume II, p. 240, col. 1, he says "Gringos—Llaman en Malaga a los extranjeros, que tienen cierta especie de acento, que los priva de una locucion facil y natural Castellana, y en Madrid dan el mismo, y por la misma causa con particularidad a los Irlandeses"

Roughly translated, this means: "Gringos—The name given in Malaga to those foreigners who have a certain accent which prevents them from speaking Spanish

fluently and naturally, and in Madrid the same is used for the same reason, especially with reference to the Irish."

The word may be found also in Melchior Emmanuel Nunez de Taboada's "Dictionnaire Espagnol-Français," published in Paris in 1845 "Gringos, -ga—Adj., (figure et famier) Grec, hebreu On le dit d'une chose inintelligible." Translation "Gringos, -ga—(figuratively and colloquially) Greek, Hebrew It is said of a thing that is not intelligible."

**grip** or **gripsack**. 1. [U.S.] A handbag or bag; a valise, portmanteau or handsatchel. 2. *Theat.* One who is employed to move the scenery or properties in a theater, a scene-shifter.

**grippe** or **grip**. Influenza or epidemic catarrh. It has been recognized as a specific disease since 1323 and is derived from the French *gripper*, to take hold, seize, from *grippe* seizure.

In [President] Jackson's day his opponents called the disease "Jackson's itch," and Tyler's opponents called it the "Tyler grippe." The *grippe* is only one of the figurative terms used by the French to describe the influenza. Others are "petite post," "petit courier," "grenade," "follette," "coquette" and "la generale." "La grippe" secured general acceptance from its graphic suggestiveness. The Germans have various descriptive names for the grip, such as "blitz-catarrh" (lightning catarrh), "schafshusten" (sheep cough), "huehnerzipf" (crowing), "modefieber" (fashionable fever). The Russians call it Chinese catarrh, the Germans often call it the Russian pest, the Italians name it the German disease, the French call it the Italian fever and the Spanish catarrh. The Italians invented the term influenza in the seventeenth century and attributed the disease to the influence of certain planets.

*New York Tribune*, Feb. 5, 1892, p. 6, col. 6.

**grips with, at**. In hand to hand struggle; locked in combat; also, in one's grasp.

Tom . . . finds himself for the first time consciously *at grips with* self and the devil. HUGHES *Tom Brown's School Days*.

**grist**. 1. Corn ready for the mill. 2. [U.S.] A quantity of anything.—**all is grist that comes to his mill**. Everything he gets he turns to account—**grind one's grist**. Do one's own work, produce something.

Gratis he never *grinds your grist*. GOETHE *Faust*, Webb's translation, act II, sc. 4.

Every year we *grind out a grist* of officers, and they come out of the hopper with epaulettes on their shoulders.

MR. LOVEJOY, of Illinois, speech in the House of Representatives, Feb. 18, 1859.—**to bring grist to the mill**. To bring in needful supplies, to bring something valuable or profitable.

Well, let them go on, it *brings grist to our mill*. FOOTE *Lame Lover*, II, 68.

**grit**. 1. [U.S.] Courage; determination; sometimes used as **clear** or **hard grit** to designate pluck of unusual quality.

He was six foot o' man, A1,  
*Clear grit* an' human natur'.

LOWELL *The Courtin'*

2. [G-] In Canada, an extreme Liberal or a Radical.

Their leaders are more ready to accept baronetcies and knighthoods than the *Grits*. GOLDWIN SMITH in *Contemporary Review* July 15, 1887.

**grocery** or **corner-grocery**. [U.S.] A rum-shop or groggery; so called from the fact that grocers formerly sold spirits.

[Grocery] in Virginia means the same thing as in Ireland—a dram-shop.

OLMSTEAD *Slave States* 73.

**groceteria**. [U.S.] A grocery-store where the customers wait on themselves and pay for the goods they need as they pass out: a proprietary term.

**grog-blossom**. An eruption on the face or nose caused by drink.

**groggery or grog-shop.** [U. S.] A low den where alcoholic drinks are sold.

In a city acknowledged by God, *grog-shops* cannot be tolerated

H. C. KIMBALL *Mormon Tabernacle Discourses* II, 163.

**grouch, n.** 1. Ill-will or resentment against a person or condition; grumbling discontent.

I wold have . . . outid all your chaffare without [en] *gruch* or *groun*.

Beryn 2408 (1400).

2. [U S] Ill humor, bad temper

The word sprang up from the fertile hotbed of American patois—it was the spontaneous coinage of the streets. Like Topsy, it “just grewed.” “Let’s make one; and say that it is a contraction and combination of the words ‘growl’ and ‘speech’—the first sound of the one joined to the latter sound of the other.” That really fits the case. The men with a *grouch* begins almost every speech with a growl.

EUGENE TAWING in *The Christian Herald* July 10, 1912.

**grouch, v.** To grumble about; murmur; complain; repine: derived from Old French *groucier*, *groucher*, to grumble.

The peple *gruched* for thei fownden no thing to drynke

SIR JOHN MAUNDEVILLE *Travels* v, 57 (1400).

As a *carte-qweel*, drye and ungreycd, cryeth, lowdest of othere qwelys, So, thou, drye & nott greycd wyth grace, *gruchchyst* lowdest.

Jacob's Well 260 (1440).

**groucher.** A grumbler; complainer.

Heo is a *gruchad* [Manuscript text, *gruchere*] & ful itowen \*

*Ancren Riwle*, 108 (1225), cited by Murray *New Eng. Dict.*

**ground** is used idiomatically in the following phrases:—bring to ground.

To bury—come to **ground**. To be overcome; fail; also, to perish.

—to lay on dry ground. To bring to land, also, to floor or gravel—to lie at ground.

To seek refuge in its burrow, as a fox—to lose ground. To lose an advantage, fall off or decline, also, to lose standing or credit; become less acceptable to retreat—to run to ground.

To have chased to its burrow, as a fox—to smell the ground.

To be nearing shallows, hence to be approaching danger—to stand or hold one's ground.

To maintain one's influence or authority; to be firm, unyielding, refuse to retreat or surrender

It is not easy to see how it [Individuality] can stand its ground MILL *Liberty* III.

—to suit down to the ground. To be completely acceptable or thoroughly becoming to—to take ground.

To occupy or move into some desired position—to take the ground. To run ashore, also, to assume an attitude about or toward

**ground floor.** A secure and desirable or lucrative position, as in business. See to GET IN-ON THE GROUND FLOOR under FLOOR.

**ground-hog.** The woodchuck

—ground-hog day. [U S] The 2nd day of February, on which day, according to rural tradition, if the ground-hog or woodchuck sees his shadow he retreats to his hole for six weeks, which is a sign of a late spring, and if he does not see his shadow there will be an early spring, woodchuck-day

**grow on or upon one.** 1. To increase in one's consciousness or estimation; as, some people grow upon one by better acquaintance. 2. To obtain increased influence over.

From that hour another phase of his misery began; and grew upon him.

READE *Cloister and the Hearth* XLV.

**grub and bub.** Food and drink.

This weasel to get him some grub . . . and a little good bub Pol *Ballads* II, 20.

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\* “He is a groucher and full of strife.”

**grub-stake.** [U. S.] A supply of food and other necessities of life in return for which a prospector for gold, oil, etc., promises to share the profits of his venture.

**Grub Street.** A street in Moorfields, London, which during the Commonwealth sheltered needy authors and pamphleteers who were compelled to live in a cheap and obscure part of the town (see *BERMUDAS*). Hence, used to designate any literary work of inferior quality or a libellous, insulting or treasonable production. In this street, now called Milton Street, lived John Foxe, who wrote the greater part of his "Booke of Martyrs," there, John Speed, the first English historian excluding annalists and chroniclers who penned his "Historie of Great Britaine," and Daniel Defoe who issued therefrom several of his publications.

Johnson came among them the solitary specimen of a past age—the last survivor of a genuine race of *Grub-street* hacks

MACAULAY *Essay on Croker's Edition of Boswell's Life of Johnson.*

**gruel, to get or take one's.** To receive or take what one deserves; hence, to be punished or killed.

What have we to hope for? We may just as well take our *gruel*.

CONAN DOYLE *Trag Korosko* 192

**Grundy, Mrs.** The symbol of propriety as viewed by the English middle classes; from Tom Morton's character of the same name in his comedy "Speed the Plough." She is envied by Dame Ashfield, a neighbor, who continually asks "What will Mrs Grundy say?" Hence, any censor of morals and stickler for propriety

Now really, this appears the common case,

Of putting too much Sabbath into Sunday—

But what is your opinion, *Mrs Grundy*? HOOD *Open Question*

**Guam, to clear out for.** To launch into an enterprise without counting the cost; to start on some bootless project. From the practise of sea-captains whose vessels, outward bound with cargo and passengers for Melbourne, were compelled to sail without cargo to some port where they could secure some, and so "clearing for Guam" was devised to meet the custom-house regulations for vessels outward bound from Melbourne

**guard, off one's.** Unsuspicious; not on the watch, unprepared as for attack or surprise; careless.

**guard, on one's.** Alert, cautious, vigilant; watchful for danger or attack; suspicious.

In like manner should the Reason be perpetually on its *guard* against the Passions

POPE *Spec* No 408

**guard, to put or set one on his.** To warn one to be vigilant or careful; to give warning of danger; to awaken one's suspicions in regard to something.

The Intelligence . . . set him upon his *guard* W WOTTON *History Rome* 327

**gum-sucker.** [Australian.] A Tasmanian.

A *gum-sucker* is a native of Tasmania, and owes his elegant nickname to the abundance of gum-trees in the Tasmanian forests

*All the Year Round* July 30, 1887.

**gun.** [U. S.] A revolver or automatic pistol.

**gun, big or great.** A person of note or importance; a "big bug."

I do not despair of its being done But what I want is some *big guns* to do it

DISRAELI *Endymion* XL.

**gunman.** [U. S.] A paid assassin or one of a gang of highwaymen who hold up their victims with the aid of a gun. Formerly an expert with a gun.

*Gunmen* of great ability and no common virtue.

CHARLES COTTON trans. of *Montaigne's Essays* II, 530.

**gush.** An extravagant display of affection or sentiment—**gusher.**

1. A person given to extravagance of praise or show of affection.

2. An oil-well—**gushing.** I. *a* Given to impulsive outbursts of gush II. *n* The act of a gusher—**gushy.** Characterized by extravagance of praise, expression, and outward show of affection

**gutter, out of the.** Of the lowest origin: said of ill-bred children or persons.

To take a girl out of the gutter and pretend that she is a lady

BESANT *Children of Gibbon* II.

**guttersnipe.** 1. A street Arab or child brought up in the gutter. 2.

*Print.* A small poster for the curb. 3. A curbstone broker.

**guy, I. n.** An oddly or quaintly dressed person, especially a man, hence, a man with striking peculiarities, as, a funny *guy*. Used also in the vernacular of the underworld with some qualifying word, as "a **fall guy**," that is (1) one who furnishes the money to enable a thief who has been caught to get out of the clutches of the law, (2) one who when working with confederates takes the arrest so as to enable the confederates to escape II. *v* 1. To jeer at, make sport of make a jest of 2. *Theat* To spoil a scene by introducing gags

The Roman street-boy who *guyed* the gladiator from the dizzy gallery

MARK TWAIN *Innocents Abroad* 203

**gyascutus.** 1. An imaginary quadruped of gigantic size with the legs on one side shorter than those of the other, so that it can walk and browse on hillsides The word is said to have been coined by a showman who pretended to have a specimen 2. A variety of Western North American beetle. so named by Le Conte

**gymkhana.** [Anglo-Ind.] A display of athletic sports and games, especially as of races and games on horseback; also, the place where such display is made.

## H

**haberdasher.** 1. A dealer in men's goods or in ribbons, trimming, needles and thread, buttons and other small wares. 2. [Eng.] A schoolmaster a provincial use 3. A hatter The word is derived from the Icelandic *hapurtask* haversack, which has been traced to *hafr*, oats, and *task*, pocket—**haberdashery.** A haberdasher's shop or the goods he sells Figuratively, trifles

**hacienda.** [Sp. Am.] A plantation on which the owner resides.

**hack.** One who or that which may be had for hire. Especially (1) A horse let out for hire, technically a half-bred horse with more bone and substance than a thoroughbred (2) A literary drudge. (3) A preacher (4) Any person or thing let out for promiscuous use

(2) Dryden was a *hack* . . . proud . . . of being able to bet his bread by his brains.

LOWELL *Among my Books* p 71.

(3) *Hack* preachers employed in the service of defaulters and absentees

WAKEFIELD *Memoirs*.

**hack, garrison.** [Brit.] See under GARRISON.

**haeremai!** [Maori.] Literally, "come hither!" a phrase of welcome adopted in New Zealand from the speech of the aborigines.

They were very glad to see us, and gave us the usual welcome, "*haeremai! haeremai!*"

CARLETON'S *Life of Henry Williams* p. 112.

**hail-fellow.** A boon companion or close or familiar friend; one with whom one is on cordial terms. Hence, **hail-fellow well met.** See WELL MET.

**hail from.** Come from; born in; belong to; as, he *hails from* London.

**hair** is used idiomatically in the following phrases: **both of a hair**. Alike, two of the same nature or kind.

Two notable knaves, *both of a hair* and both cosen germaines to the devill

GREENE *Upstart Courter* in *Harleian Misc.*, II, 244

—**by the turn of a hair**. By the narrowest chance or closest shave —**not to turn a hair**. Not to show signs of confusion or of being disconcerted, complacent, composed

The celebrated Mellstock fiddlers, who could play from sunset to dawn *without turning a hair*

R D BLACKMORE *Murray's Magazine*, 1888

—**to a hair**. To a nicety, with extreme accuracy, exactly —**to make one's hair stand on end**. To awaken fear, cause alarm or terror in

If I were to tell you some incidents of my life since you and I last met, I should make your *hair stand on end*

J S WINTER *Army Society* III.

—**to split hairs**. To draw unduly fine distinctions.

He *splits hairs* with such surprising versatility

L STEPHEN *Hours in Library* I, IX, 316

—**to take a hair of the dog or wolf that bit one**. To take more of the same or a similar thing as caused discomfort, sickness, or trouble as a cure, especially to drink more liquor in the morning to counteract excesses of the night before. Sometimes varied in form. See quotation

'Twas a hot night with some of us last night, John: Shall we *pluck a hair of the same wolf* to-day, proctor John?

JONSON *Bartholomew Fayre* I.

**hairpin**. [U. S.] A tall lanky man. Used in the phrase, "That's the sort of *hairpin* I am."

'Tis glorious when heroes

Go in to right their wrongs;

But if you're only *hairpins*

Why, then beware of tongs! CAREY OF CARSON *Ballad*.

**halcyon days**. Fourteen days of winter—seven preceding and seven following the winter solstice or shortest day of the year—when the kingfisher (*halcyon*) was believed to build its nest, the sea was calm, and the weather fair. Hence, days of rest and rejoicing.

Thou bring'st me back the *halcyon days*

Of grateful rest, the week of leisure

BRET HARTE *On a Cone of the Big Tree*.

**half-and-half**. [Brit.] Old and new ale or ale and porter mixed.

**half-baked**. 1. Baked on one side or not baked through; doughy; hence, raw; crude; immature or ill-digested.

In this tax lies the science of redistribution, and the true rejection of all spurious or *half-baked* economics, like socialism and communism

*North American Review*, xciii, p. 56.

2. Simple-minded; half-witted; lacking in intellect; harmlessly imbecile.

He treated his cousin as a sort of harmless lunatic, and as they say in Devon, *half-baked*.

CHARLES KINGSLEY *Westward Ho!* III.

**half-cocked**. [Brit.] Fuddled with drink; half drunk.—**to go off half-cocked**. To act or speak hastily and without reckoning on the result, go off prematurely, fail through want of careful consideration

**halfman, halfhorse, halfalligator**. [U. S.] A Mississippi Valley backwoodsman and boatman.

The backwood-men of Kentucky are styled *half-man, half-horse* and *half-alligator* by the settler in Mississippi, and held accordingly in great respect

WASHINGTON IRVING *History of New York* II, 79

These *half-horse* and *half-alligator* sort of politicians are becoming a stench in the nostrils of the American people.

*The Argus*, Oregon, Oct. 13, 1860.

**half-past kissing-time.** [Brit.] A playful reply to a lady-friend or a young girl when asked for the time.

It's *half-past kissing-time*, and time to kiss again,  
For time is always on the move, and ne'er will remain.

G. ANTHONY *Kissing Time*.

**halfpenny.** Cheap and tawdry; of little worth.—**a bad halfpenny.** Something that finds its way back to the owner.

When a man has been upon any errand, or attempting any object which has proved unsuccessful or impracticable, he will say on his return, It is a *bad half-penny*, meaning he has returned as he went.

GROSE *Vulgar Tongue*.

**half-seas-over.** Far gone in drink; half drunk.

**half the battle.** See THE FIRST STROKE IS HALF THE BATTLE (p. 29).

**Halifax law.** See under LAW.

**halloo before (or till) you're out of the wood, don't.** Don't rejoice too soon or exult till all danger is over.

He *halloos*, not *before* he is out of the wood, but before he is well into it

FAIRBAIRN *Contemporary Review* June 1876, p. 137.

**halves, to the or on the.** [U. S.] To the extent or on the basis of an equal division of profits; share and share alike; fifty-fifty; half and half.

To the *halves* still survives among us, though apparently obsolete in England. It means to let or hire a piece of land, receiving half the profit in money or in kind.

LOWELL *Biglow Papers*.

**hammer.** 1. To find fault with; decry; scold. 2. To beat down prices; cheapen. 3. [Brit.] (1) In finance, to declare one a defaulter. (2) In sports, to beat or punish —**hammer-beam.** A beam projecting laterally from the inside of a wall, which receives the weight of the upper part of a roof —**hammer-cloth.** The cloth that covers the driver's seat in certain types of carriages.—**to bring, come, sell or send to the hammer.** To sell at auction.

Old Sir Robert's pride, his books, *came to the hammer* here in March.

TENNYSON *Audley Court*

If you like it, keep it, if not, *send it to the hammer* RUSKIN *Pol. Econ* Art II, 128.  
—**to fall upon or go at it hammer and tongs.** 1. To tackle something with vigor; act energetically. 2. To attack violently

Our ships were soon hard at it, *hammer and tongs* MARRYAT *P. Simple*, XXXV.

Malone dashed out of the doorway and *fell upon them hammer and tongs*

H KINGSLEY *Ravenshoe* lx.

—**to hammer out or into.** 1. To think out or devise, as a plan; bring into shape; form. 2. To impress on the mind of another, as by iteration

**hand** is used in various idiomatic senses in the following phrases.

—**all hands.** Every member of a ship's crew; also, all members of a party engaged collectively in some particular work

If *all hands* had been got together they would not have more than half-filled the room.

DICKENS *Uncommercial Traveler*.

—**at first-hand.** From the originator or producer, directly from the source.

Oh, indeed, I should much rather come here *at first-hand* if you will have me.

JANE AUSTEN.

—**at hand.** Within reach, near by, convenient; impending —**from hand to mouth.** Without forethought or previous conservation; in an improvident way —**hand and hand or in glove.** In close intimacy, very familiar, on intimate terms —**hand in hand.** With hands joined in friendly union, hence, in alliance, agreement, or union.

Thus, *hand in hand* through life we'll go;

Its chequered paths of joy and woe

With cautious steps we'll tread

NATHANIEL COTTON *The Fireside*.

—**hand over hand.** Rapidly, as by passing one's hands alternately one above the other, in climbing a rope or hauling a line, or after the other in swimming; hence,



quickly and easily — **hand over head**. Recklessly; without deliberation or discrimination

A lavish guardian, who spent . . . the estate *hand over head*

JAMES LOUIS XIV, III, 24

— **hands off!** Do not touch! keep away! let alone! — **hands up!** Raise the hands above the head a peremptory command used by policemen in making an arrest and by thugs about to rob a victim — **in hand**. 1. Delivered in advance, paid in the hand 2. In course of completion or under consideration 3. Under control

If he had strong passions he kept them well *in hand*

L. STEPHEN *Hours in Library* I, iv, 151.

— **off hand**. In a careless or in an unhesitating way — **on all hands**. 1. On every side, in all directions 2. On the part of every one, by everybody — **on hand**. 1. In present or rightful possession; as, we have too many goods *on hand*, all the money *on hand*. 2. In place, present, as, he was promptly *on hand* — **out of hand**. 1. Unruly; lawless, out of control, as, the rioters got *out of hand* 2. Immediately, without delay, offhand

Somebody shall marry the baggage *out of hand*, and let us have done with that

CARLYLE *Frederick* II, vi, 89

3. Off one's hands, ended, done — **to change hands**. To pass into a new ownership; change owners

The whole soil would soon *change hands* MACAULAY *History of England* II, 160

— **to gain or get the upper hand**. To get the advantage of, obtain a lead or command over — **to get or keep one's hand in**. To get or keep in practise

Write a line or two of it every day *to keep your hand in*

CHESTERFIELD *Letters* II, 246

— **to get or send through hands**. To pass through different stages of a manufacturing process to completion, execute, finish. — **to give one's hand upon anything**. To pledge oneself as consenting or agreeing

The moment I choose, I can be rid of Mr Hyde, *I give you my hand upon that*

R L STEVENSON *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

— **to have one's hands full**. To be fully occupied, have as much work as one can do — **to have on hand**. To be engaged on or occupied with, be concerned in — **to have on one's hands**. To have as a dependent or a charge, burden, or responsibility — **to hold one's hand**. To restrain oneself, stay or arrest one's hand, to refrain, forbear, do nothing, used usually of an action calculated to hurt or injure another

They fought until they both did sweat  
Till he cried, "Pedlar, pray *hold your hand!*"

ROBIN HOOD *Ballads* v, 250

— **to hold up one's hands**. To surrender, give up, submit — **to hold up the hands of**. To support, encourage, sustain, as in an endeavor — **to keep in hand**. To have under control, subject to discipline — **to lay hands on**. 1. To seize with the hands, make prisoner, also, assault 2. To ordain by laying on of hands — **to lend a hand**. To assist in performing some task, aid in some piece of manual labor — **to make no hand of**. To be unable to solve or be inexplicable to — **to make a poor hand at**. To make little progress or slight impression, to be inefficient — **to shake hands with**. 1. To salute by grasping the hands as in greeting, to confirm a bargain 2. To prove the absence of ill feeling, as when two pugilists meet in the prize ring 3. To congratulate oneself, usually, **to shake hands with oneself**. — **to set one's hands to**. To engage in or undertake — **to take off one's hands**. To relieve one of the responsibility of or assume the responsibility for (another) — **with a high hand**. In a dictatorial way, with imperious manner, arrogantly.

**handicap**. [Sports.] An allowance of weight or distance based on the records, ages, or sex of competitors in races: *from hand in the cap* in allusion to the drawing of a lot out of a cap.

The race carried so many penalties and allowances that it partook somewhat of the nature of a *handicap*

HAWLEY SMART *Hard Lines* XXI

**handle to his name**. A title of rank, honor, etc., as Colonel, Doctor, Lord, etc. — **handle without gloves or mittens**. See under **GLOVE**.

**hand-me-downs.** 1. [Brit.] Second-hand clothing. 2. [U. S.] Ready-made clothing.

**handsome is that handsome does.** Actions appropriate to the occasion, not words, are the test of one's sincerity or merit.

**handsome thing, the.** Generosity or magnanimity; especially in the phrase, **to do the handsome thing.** To provide liberally, as to a daughter's marriage portion.

**handwriting on the wall.** An inscription or indication of threatening disaster; an ill omen: in allusion to Belshazzar's feast, where the words *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin* were written on the wall (see *Dan.* v). Belshazzar was slain.

**hang** is used idiomatically in the following phrases: **I'll be hanged!** an exclamation of surprise sometimes preceded by *well*.

*I'll be hanged if I ever give you anything another time.* MRS CARLYLE *Letters* 143.

You and your Persian customs *be hanged*, Sir! R BRIDGES *Feast of Bacchus* V.

**—I'll see you hanged first.** An expression of angry denial or refusal, or an imprecation **—to get the hang of.** [U. S.] To become familiar with; used indiscriminately of persons and things—mechanical devices, tools, political situations, etc.

Somehow I can't *get the hang of* this new master. D P THOMPSON *Locke Amsden* 94.

I never *got the hang of* it exactly, but the States was a pressin' the Injuns to go, an' some wanted to, an' some didn't. J H BEADLE *Western Wilds* 30.

**—to hang by a thread.** Depend on very frail support.

Great God! on what a slender *thread hang* everlasting things. WATTS *Hymn*

**—to hang fire.** To be irresolute or slow of action; said originally of a gun when slow in communicating fire to a charge **—to hang out.** To live, reside, lodge.

I say, old boy, where do you *hang out*? DICKENS *Pickwick* XXX.

**—to hang out a shingle.** [U. S.] To begin the practise of law or medicine, by putting up a small sign, bearing one's name and profession **—to hang the jury.** [U. S.] To bring about a disagreement and thus invalidate the trial.

These men either caused their acquittal or *hung the jury* by refusing to agree to any verdict save that of not guilty. JAMES WEIR *Long Powers* I, 142.

**—to hang together.** To be closely associated, to stick together, present a united front.

We shall either beg together or *hang together*.  
It skils not so we be together.

JOHN LYLY (1553-1601) *Galatea* act i, sc. 4.

**—to hang up.** [U. S.] To end a telephone conversation by placing the receiver on the hook, also, to put up for the time being, be by or tie up.

He got befogged, and, in the language of the Kentucky boatmen, *hung up* for the night. MR PERKINS of New York, House of Representatives, Jan. 20, 1854.

**—to hang up one's hat.** [Brit.] To take possession of a new home, move in.

When a man marries and goes to the wife's house to live, he is said to *hang up his hat*. ELWORTHY *West Somerset Word-Book*.

**hangdog-look.** A degraded base or sneaking appearance, such as is fit for a hangman of dogs.

A squinting, meager, *hang-dog* look.

OTWAY *Cheats of Scapin* act iii, sc. 1.

**hank for hank.** On terms of equality; at the same rate: a phrase of the sea applied to sailing-vessels when beating to windward. A *hank* is one of the rings with which a fore-and-aft sail hangs to the mast or stay.

Able to go, *hank for hank* with anything that swims the sea.

C JOHNSON *Chrysal.* II, 238.

**hanky-panky business, tricks, or work.** [Brit.] Hocus-pocus; jugglery; hence, double-dealing, **—a bit of hanky-panky.** Something said or done to mislead, a piece of trickery.

He kept a pretty sharp lookout to see that what he was pleased to call *hanky-panky* was not carried on under his nose. G R SIMS *Zeph.* XIII.

**happy.** Drunk to the point of merriness.

**happy dispatch.** Suicide as practised by the Japanese; *hara-kiri*.

It was to provide Lord Harry Brentwood with a seat [in Parliament] that I was to commit this act of *happy dispatch* *Mistletoe Bough*, 1885.

**happy family.** An incongruous group of individuals; an ironical use.

**happy-go-lucky.** I. *a.* Trusting easily to luck, improvident; haphazard. II. *adv.* As one pleases, anyhow, at will.

There were never such comfortable, easy going, *happy-go-lucky* people

KINGSLEY *Water Babies* VI, 241.

**happy hunting-grounds.** [U. S.] Heaven, according to the North American Indian conception of a future state.

**hara-kiri.** [Jap.] Suicide by disembowelment practised by Japanese nobles, military commanders, etc., under exalted impulse, disgrace or under death sentence. Called by Englishmen "happy dispatch." Misspelled *hara-kari* and *harr-karri*.

The Liberal-Unionist party will hesitate long before committing *hara-kari* in that fashion *Scottish Leader*, March 17, 1888.

**hard** is used idiomatically in the following phrases: **a hard nut to crack.** See under **NUT**.—**hard and fast.** 1. Absolutely binding, fixed and unalterable, as, a *hard and fast* bargain

It is impossible to fix any *hard and fast* limits for the close of the Stone period

J. EVANS, *Ancient Bronze Implements* I, 1

2. Firmly, as, the ship grounded *hard and fast*.

—**hard as the nether millstone.** Hardened in heart, inexorable, utterly devoid of feeling for others

Somewhat, few of us are certain to keep our hearts as *hard as the nether millstone*

*Nineteenth Century*, 1887

—**hard-bake.** Taffy —**hard-baked.** 1. Unfeeling, made callous 2. Set in vicious habits —**hard-boiled.** Hardened in mind or feeling, insensible, callous —**hard-bound** Slow in action —**hard by.** Close to, near by, in the neighborhood or immediate vicinity

*Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,*

Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove

GRAY *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, st. 29.

—**hard case.** One who is irreclaimable, as from wickedness or vices, a scapegrace; an unscrupulous person Hence, a hardened criminal

La Bonte had lost all traces of civilized humanity, and might justly claim to be as *hard a case* as any of the mountaineers there present *Ruxton Life in Far West*, 71

—**hard cash, dollars, money,** etc. Coin as distinguished from paper or soft money

—**hard cured.** Thoroughly dried and salted as fish —**hard-faced.** Of forbidding countenance, severe, stern Also rendered **hard-favored**.

He was *hard-favored*, with a scarred and weather-beaten countenance

SCOTT *Quentin Durward*, p. 112.

—**hard-fisted.** Miserly, avaricious —**hard-handed.** Despotie, severe, cruel.

—**hard-headed.** Shrewd as in business, also, dogged, stubborn —**hard-hearted.** Pitiless, remorseless —**hard-labored.** Produced with difficulty, showing evidences of constraint and effort, studied —**hard lines.** Unpleasant, as in experience, treatment, or conditions —**hard liquor.** [U. S.] Liquor containing much alcohol, especially, whisky, spirituous liquor as contrasted with *soft drinks*, which contain no alcohol —**hard-mouthed.** [Brit.] 1. Wilful, difficult to deal with, not easily controlled 2. Coarse in speech 3. Not sensible to the bit said of a horse

(1) The flesh when it comes to the turn of being bearer, is wonderfully head-strong and *hard-mouthed*

SWIFT *Operation of the Spirit* sect. n, par. 9.

—**hard of hearing.** Somewhat deaf —**hard row to hoe.** [U. S.] A task beset with difficulties —**hard sense.** Sound and trustworthy advice, common sense

—**hard-shell.** Stubborn, uncompromising said of one devoted to or set in his principles —**hard stuff.** [Australian & U. S.] Whisky, gin, brandy, or rum Compare **HARD LIQUOR** —**hard up.** In straitened circumstances, in want of money.

—**in hard condition.** Fit, well trained, as a pugilist or a race-horse —**it shall go**

**hard but I will, or will not.** It may be difficult, painful, or troublesome, but I certainly will (or will not), I will, or will not, exert the utmost efforts to

*It shall go hard but I'll prove it by another*

SHAKESPEARE *Tempest* act iii, sc. 1.

—**the hard word.** 1. A password or sign 2. A direct or blunt refusal 3. Personal abuse, disparagement, scandal

He would send *the hard word* round the country about me!

STOKER *Snake's Pass* XVI.

4. A secret warning —**to go hard.** To result painfully; prove troublesome.

If law, authority, and power deny not,

It will *go hard* with poor Antonio

SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice* act iii, sc. 2. 1 292

**hard-pan.** [U. S.] A solid basis or firm foundation: a term derived from mining in which it designates the hard stratum below the soft-soil, and frequently applied to prices as having come down to *hard-pan*. Compare BED-ROCK.

**Hardshell Baptists.** A strict sect of Baptists in the United States, who are said to oppose missions and Sunday-schools.

The "*Hardshell Baptists*," . . . exist in all the old Western and South Western States.

EDWARD EGLESTON *Hoosier Schoolmaster*, 67.

**hardship.** 1. Anything the endurance of which is a severe tax, as on the bodily strength or the mind. Toil, want, or exposure are some of the *hardships* that man may be called on to endure. 2. That which serves to oppress or cause injustice to, as oppressive laws.

**hardtack.** A kiln-dried hard baked biscuit for seamen and soldiers; ship's biscuit.

**hardware.** [U. S.] Pots and pans, kettles, and other metal articles for domestic use; also, tools, agricultural and other implements, and nails, screws, bolts, etc., used in building, boxing, etc.; ironmongery.

**hare** is used figuratively or idiomatically in a number of phrases.—**first catch your hare.** See under CATCH.—**harebrained** or **hair-brained.** Flighty, reckless, skittish, impudent

When the government of a nation depends upon the caprice of the ignorant, *hair-brained* vulgar

SMOLLETT *Peregrine Pickle* XLIII.

—**hare-footed.** Swift in movement, fleet: usually, poetical —**harelip.** A fissure or vertical division of the lip, resembling the lip of the hare —**hare's-ear.** A yellow-flowering plant —**hare's foot.** 1. A brush used in applying rouge to the face 2. A tree, the corkwood, so called from the cotton of the seeds which covers the pod like the fur of a hare's foot 3. A variety of clover with soft, silky heads —**hare's-tail.** A cotton-grass which bears a white cottony tuft in its fruit —**mad as a March hare.** Acting freakishly or wildly, eccentric, foolish in allusion to the actions of the hare in the breeding season —**to make a hare of.** To subject to derision; expose to ridicule, make a fool of

**hare-back.** A retracing of one's steps; backward move; to return to a subject that has been dropped.

Had they gone and told Silver, all might have turned out differently; but they had their orders, I suppose, and decided to sit quietly where they were and *hare back* again to "Lillibullero."

R. L. STEVENSON *Treasure Island*, xvi.

**harness.** Business; also, its regulations and requirements.—**in harness.** Employed.—**to be in harness.** To be equipped and ready for business; also, to be in employment.—**to die in harness.** See under DIE.

**haro.** A protest against trespass or injustice preliminary to the instituting of legal proceedings: a term used in the Channel Islands.

**harp.** To revert to some subject incessantly in speaking or writing or in thought; dwell unduly, tediously, or vexatiously.

Still *harping* on my daughter.

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act ii, sc. 2.

—to **harp on one or the same string**. To dwell at wearisome length on one subject; bore by repetition

The Cardinall made a countenance to Lord Howard that he should *harpe no longer upon that string* MORE in *Grafton Chron.* II, 773

**harum-scarum**, *a.* Thoughtless or reckless haste; giddy; wild: per-haps in allusion to a hare that is scared.

From a walk the horse soon passed to a trot, from a trot to a gallop, and from a gallop to a *harum-scarum* scamper. IRVING *Alhambra*, Governor Manco, p. 402.

**harum-scarum**, *n.* A wild, reckless, or thoughtless person.

**has-been**. [Scot. & U. S.] One who once *was* but *is* no longer; one whose best days are over; also, an antiquated person or thing. When applied to persons frequently used invidiously or disparagingly

John Jones may be described as one of the *has beens*. HONE *Every-day Book* II, 820.

**hash** is used figuratively if not idiomatically in the following phrases:

**hash-house**. [U. S.] A cheap boarding-house or restaurant; a beany —to **hash up**. To present again, as old matter in a new form, serve something made up of matter previously used, as to *hash up* Maquet's "Three Musqueteers" as Dumas' and film it —to **make a hash of**. 1. To make a mess of, spoil. She *made a hash of* the proper names, to be sure GRANT ALLEN *Tents of Shem* XVI.

2. To cook up afresh and serve again: literally and figuratively —to **settle one's hash**. To silence or put down a person, also, to get rid of one.

My finger was in an instant on the trigger, and another second would have *settled his hash* E. E. NAPIER *Excursion S. Africa* II, 389

**hat** occurs in the following idiomatic phrases: **a bad, very bad or shocking bad hat**. [Brit.] See under **BAD**.

—a **bee-gum hat**. [U. S.] A high silk hat —a **black hat**. [Australia.] A newly arrived immigrant —by **this hat**. A form of assertion equivalent to "I'll bet my hat", "My hat to a halfpenny," etc

By *this hat* then, he in the red face had it

SHAKESPEARE *Merry Wives of Windsor* act 1, sc 1

—**hat-in-hand**. Most deferential, servilely submissive, obsequious, also, in a humble manner —**hat-money**. Money paid to a ship's captain for the care of goods placed in his charge, **primage** —to **eat one's hat**. See under **EAT** —to **pass around the hat**. To take up a collection.

Lamartine, after *passing round the hat* in Europe and America, takes to his bed from wounded pride when the French Senate votes him a subsidy

LOWELL *Among My Books* 1st Series, 370.

**hatches, under**. 1. In confinement; hence in bondage or adversity. 2. Dead and buried.

And though his body's *under hatches*,

His soul has gone aloft CHARLES DIBDIN *Tom Bowling* st. 3.

**hatchet, to bury the**. See under **BURY**.

**hatchet, to dig up or take up the**. [U. S.] To declare war; to resume hostilities: from Amerind tribal ceremonies.

Three Nations of French Indians had *taken up the hatchet* against the Indians.

GEORGE WASHINGTON *Journal* i 21.

The chief of the St Francis tribe declared that Governor Carleton had endeavored to persuade him to *take up the hatchet* against the Americans, but in vain.

IRVING *Washington* ii, 46.

**hatchet, to sling or throw the**. To make exaggerated statements. The ladies titter, knowing, as we do, the skipper's habit of *slinging the hatchet*.

T. B. FOREMAN *Trip to Spain*, 97.

**haul in with**. [Naut.] To sail close to the wind; to approach an object more closely by thus altering the course.

**haul off**. 1. To withdraw or retreat.

He took it in mortal offense, and from that moment has been *hauling off* to his former enemies.

THOMAS JEFFERSON *Writings* III, 495.

2. To make a backward movement of the arm and body so as to strike a powerful blow with the fist

**haul over the coals.** See under COAL.

**haul round.** [Naut.] To shift to any point on the compass: said of the wind.

**haul the wind.** [Naut.] To turn the bow of a ship nearer to the point from which the wind is blowing; hence, to retire from one's position or standpoint.

**have** is used in various senses in the following phrases:—**have a care.**

Be careful; take care; beware.

Good Mounsieur *have a care* the honey bag break not

SHAKESPEARE *Midsummer Night's Dream* act iv sc 1

—**have a crush on.** To admire greatly, be in love with —**have at** (him, you, etc.)

Attack (him, you, etc.), strike a blow at or against (him, you, etc) —**have-not, n.** A person without property —**have with you.** I will accompany you — **to have in hand.** 1. To hold in restraint or in full control, to have in one's power, as horses

2. To be busied or occupied with, engaged upon, as, he *has a book in hand* — **to have it.**

1. To gain the advantage used chiefly of voting 2. To receive reproof or punishment

—**to have it out.** To bring a matter to a conclusion or final understanding, also, to speak out freely

Suppose we *have it out* Here in the fields, decide the question so?

BROWNING *Red Cottage*, 382

—**to have it out of a person** To retaliate on or punish him — **to have no brow of.** [Scot.] To be impressed unfavorably with — **to have on.** To wear — **to have one out.** To meet one in a duel — **to have one's eye on.** To have in one's mind, be thoughtful, careful, or wary of — **to have on toast.** [Brit.] To have in an uncomfortable position, have the advantage of — **to have the conscience.** To be bold enough, to consider it proper with infinitive, as, he *had the conscience* to refuse

—**to have up.** To bring up before some authority, usually a court of justice

**havelock.** A white cover for a military cap, made with a long flap that hangs down at the back and protects the neck from the sun. Named for Sir Henry Havelock, a British general in the Indian Mutiny, 1857, and used in the War of Secession, 1861-65

**hawk at, to.** To pounce upon or swoop down on.  
I had rather see a wren *hawk at* a fly,  
Than this decision FLETCHER *Two Noble Kinsmen* act v, sc. 3.

**Hawk-eye State.** Iowa: so called in memory of an Amerind chief of that region.

**hawk from a hernshaw, to know a.** To be normally intelligent; possess common abilities of discernment; be wide-awake.

The clever Elliott, who knew a *hawk from a hernshaw*, never floundered into that platitude

CARLILE *Frederick the Great* X, xxi

**hawse-hole, to come in through the.** [Naut.] To work one's way up from the lowest place; begin at the bottom of the ladder: opposed to *to come in through the cabin window*

Very few captains and admirals *came in at the hawse-holes*

C N ROBINSON *Brit. Fleet*, 341

**hay** is used figuratively in the following idiomatic phrases:—**neither**

**hay nor grass.** Neither one thing nor the other: said of things spoiled in the making Compare BETWEEN THE HAY AND THE GRASS — **to dance his or her lane.** To give expression to joy or to anger — **to dance in a net.** To impose upon or deceive — **to dance in the half-peck.** To remain a bachelor on a brother's marriage — **to make hay of.** To throw into disorder, turn topsy-turvy, upset

Oh, father, how you are *making hay of my things!*

MARIA EDGEWORTH *Rose, Thistle, and Shamrock* I, 2.

—**to make hay while the sun shines.** To improve an opportunity, take advantage of a favorable time.

**hayseed.** [U. S.] A man from the country; a farm-hand; rustic.

**haze.** [U. S.] 1. To punish by overwork, especially at some disagreeable and unnecessary task.

It [haze] is very expressive to a sailor, and means to punish by hard work.

DANA *Two Years Before the Mast* VII.

2. To put through harsh mock discipline; subject to severe practical jokes, as students at college or school.

The petty bullying or *hazing*, and the whole system of college tyranny, is a contemptible denial of fair play G W CURTIS in *Harper's Monthly* LXXVI, 635.

**head** is used figuratively or idiomatically in the following phrases:

—**to have a swelled head.** To have an inflated opinion of oneself; to suffer from exaggerated ego said of one inclined to overestimate his own importance.  
—**draw to a head.** To bring to an issue or a climax, as affairs which have been undecided, to terminate, close

*Come to a head*—like a boil or a rebellion

DIAZ *W Henry and Lett*, 134

—**from head to foot.** Completely, thoroughly, all over—**head and front.** The principal feature. Shakespearian phrase for an outstanding or most important part

It is most true true I have married her;

The very *head and front* of my offending,

Hath this extent, no more

SHAKESPEARE *Othello* act i, sc 3.

—**head and head.** [Naut.] Side by side, hank for hank said of ships on the same course —**head and shoulders.** 1. With violence, as, to *diag* one in *head and shoulders*

2. By a good deal, very much, by far, as, he towers *head and shoulders* above them

—**head or chief cook and bottle-washer.** [Brit.] 1. The boss, the foreman, one having authority 2. A maid of all work —**head first.** Precipitately —**head-money.**

Money paid as a per capita tax or a bonus of so much a head —**head on.** Running with the head or bow forward, as a train or a ship —**head over heels.** In a somersault, clumsily, in a tumbling and overturned manner. more properly, *heels over head.*

Why did you hurl royalty *head over heels* out of yonder Tuileries' windows?

THACKERAY *Paris Sketch-book*, 32.

—**heads or tails?** A question asked when tossing a coin to decide a proposition, "head" indicating the side of the coin bearing the effigy of a head and "tail" indicating the reverse

One person tosses the halfpenny up, and the other calls at pleasure *head or tail.*

STRUTT *Sports and Pastimes*, 296

Used also in the form **heads I win and tails you lose** to characterize a one-sided business proposition —**neither head nor tail.** Neither one thing nor the other.—**off or out of one's head.** Insane, delirious

His three companions exchanged a second look of meaning, and one of the men whispered to his mate, "He's clean *off his head*" All the Year Round, 1887

—**on one's head.** Upon oneself, as the responsibility for the consequences of an act or course pursued —**out of one's own head.** By oneself, through one's own initiative, of one's own accord —**over head and ears.** Deeply immersed or involved, especially in love or debt —**over one's head.** Beyond one's ability to understand,

too subtle or intellectual for one's comprehension —**to eat one's head off.** See under **EAT** —**to get the head into chancery.** See **CHANCERY** —**to give one his or her head.** To free from restraint, give freedom, let go Adopted from the stable

He had yielded so far to the necessities of the case as to give *Lady Jane* her head

MRS E LYNN LINTON *Poston Carew* XXXIV.

—**to give one's head for the washing.** To submit tamely, to abandon without a struggle.

For my part it shall ne'er be said,

I for the washing gave my head,

Nor did I turn my back for fear

BUTLER *Hudibras*, I in

—**to have a head on one's shoulders.** To have one's senses, be able to think for oneself —**to hit the nail on the head.** See under **HIT** —**to keep one's head above water.** To support oneself without loss or profit, to maintain one's position

—**to lay or put heads together.** To confer one with another or others; also, to conspire —**to know by head-mark.** To recognize by personal appearance.—

—**to lose one's head.** To fail in self-control; become confused —**to make neither**

**head nor tail of anything.** To fail to understand; be unable to explain or make intelligible

It is difficult to make head or tail of the whole business

J H MCCARTHY *French Revolution* II, 88.

—to put out of one's head. 1. To dismiss from one's thoughts 2. To cause one to forget —to take into one's head. To be seized with a sudden notion, form an idea or intention —two heads are better than one. Collective intelligence is superior to individual intelligence

**head-line.** [U. S.] A line of type set above the text to which it refers.

—head-liner. A writer of head-lines.—head-lineese. The idiom peculiar to head-lines, a form of journalistic dialect

It will pass out of the language into head-lineese, which is a peculiar argot bearing no relation to human speech.

DON MARQUIS in *The Sun*, New York

**head-lock.** [Sports.] A grip formerly used in wrestling.

Those who have had the head-lock applied to them seem to be in agony

*New York Herald* Jan 27, 1921.

**head rights.** [U. S.] An Amerind's tribal property rights.

I was married to a Cherokee [woman] that had head rights

J H BEADLE *Western Wilds*, 43.

**health, for one's.** [U. S.] For a really serious purpose, such as money-making.

"Don't you think that your devotion to politics is hurting your health?" "I'm not in politics for my health"

*Toledo Blade* Aug, 1911

**heap coals of fire on one's head.** See under COAL.

**heap, struck all of a.** [Brit.] Paralyzed mentally; knocked out; prostrated; overcome.

This alarmed us both; and he seemed all struck of a heap RICHARDSON *Pamela*, l 205

**heart** is used idiomatically in the following terms:—**after one's own heart.** See under AFTER.—**at heart.** At the center or bottom; essentially; substantially —**athletic heart.** Enlargement of the heart occurring among athletes —**bless her or your heart!** Exclamations of affection, approval or gratitude

Bless her heart! good lady!

FIELDING *Miser* v, 1.

Bless your heart, child, you are a good girl

MRS SEWELL *Patience Heart* XXV, 166

—by heart. By rote; so as to know perfectly

She told ek al the prophesies by herte

CHAUCER *Troilus and Cryseide* v, 1494

—dear heart! dear heart alive! Common ejaculations indicating surprise or invocatory exclamations —**faint heart never won fair lady.** One who is lukewarm in his love-making is not likely to succeed in gaining the love of the woman he admires.

And let us mind, faint heart ne'er wan

A lady fair;

Wha does the utmost that he can,

Will whiles do mair

BURNS *To Dr. Blacklock*.

—for my heart. For my life, as, I would not for my heart be discovered

I could not get him for my heart to do it

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act i, sc 2

—have a heart. [U S] Be charitable, merciful, considerate, or kind used reprovingly in a jocular sense —**heart alive!** An ejaculation of surprise or vexation —**heart and hand; heart and soul.** With good will, enthusiastically, earnestly, heartily; with all one's energies and powers; completely; as, "I am with you heart and hand," "He threw himself heart and soul into his work" —**heart-beat.** A pulsation of the heart, hence, an emotion; also, a very short space of time

In another heart-beat the whole valley was afloat

*Harper's Magazine* March 1883, p 584

—heart-bird. The turnstone —**heart-borer.** A moth common in Canada and Colorado —**heart-bound.** Hard-hearted, stingy —**heart-break.** Deep grief, overwhelming sorrow

Those griefs, cares, heart-breakers, and sorrowes, which are incident daily to married folks.

BABINGTON *Commandments* vii, 64



—**heart-breaker**. 1. One who or that which breaks the heart, as by trifling with the affections

We don't defer to the ball-room butterfly . . . but to the regular professional *heart-breaker* Notes and Queries 3d series IV, 301.

2. [Humorous] A curl, love-lock, also, a beauty-spot

A red *Heart-breaker* next she mow'd off,

A wart that Dido was full proud of COTTON *Poetical Works*, 124.

—**heart-broken**. Overwhelmingly grieved, having the affections sorely wounded

1. A very brave person said of sailors 2. A courageous disposition —**heart of oak**.

A valorous man, one who is steadfast and capable of endurance or resistance. —**heart's blood**. Life, as, to give one's *heart's blood* for one's country

Creations which throbbed with the very *heart's blood* of genius

LOWELL *Works* vol IV, 397 (1890).

—**heart-scald**. Shame, disgust, aversion —**heart-scalded**. Grieved, troubled —**heart-sinking**. Depressing, as, a *heart-sinking* sensation overcame her and she fainted away —**heart-stirring**. Exhilarating —**heart-stricken**. Overwhelmed with grief or fear —**heart-string**. A supposed nerve or tendon that holds the heart in place, hence, in the plural, the deepest feelings, or strongest affections —**heart stroke**.

1. The striking of the apex of the heart against the wall of the chest. 2. Neuralgia of the heart, breast, pang —**heart-whole**. Having affections free; not in love; having unshaken courage, undaunted, single-hearted, sincere

Cupid hath clapt him o' th' shoulder, but

He warrant him *heart whole*

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act iv, sc 1.

Such a gay, pretty, *heart-whole* laugh MRS HUNGERFORD *Lady Brankmere* I, 1, 181.

—**in one's heart of hearts**. Privately, secretly, in depths of one's being

I will wear him in *my hearts core*

I, in *my Heart of Hearts*

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act iii, sc 2

—**next one's heart**. Something very dear, or vital —**out of heart**. In low spirits, discouraged, depressed, disheartened

What is it

Has put you *out of heart?*

TENNYSON *Promise of May* III.

—**to break one's heart**. To kill, crush, or overwhelm with sorrow, also, to disappoint —**to carry or wear one's heart upon one's sleeve**. To show plainly one's feelings;

to lay one's cards on the table, to be frank and above-board

I will wear *my heart upon my sleeve* for daws to peck at

SHAKESPEARE *Othello* act i, sc 1.

—**to find in one's heart**. To be willing or desirous —**to have or learn by heart**. To memorize so as to be able to repeat or write out correctly without the help of the original —**to have at heart**. To cherish; be set upon earnestly

The Correction of Impudence is what I have very much at *Heart*

STEELE *Spectator* No 20 (1711).

—**to have in the heart**. To purpose; intend —**to have one's heart in one's boots**. To be in a state of extreme fear

*My heart sank*, as the saying is, *into my boots*; and from that first look onward, I hated the very thought of *Treasure Island* R. L. STEVENSON *Treasure Island* xii.

—**to have one's heart in one's mouth**. To be excited or frightened excessively

I fell across a beam that lay in the way, and faith, *my heart was in my mouth*, I thought I had stumbled over a spirit.

ADDISON *Drummer* I, 1

—**to have one's heart in the right place**. To be sympathetic or disposed kindly toward

Your *heart is in its right place*, if you only had the right words on your tongue

SCHMITZ transl of *Stande Buchholtz Family*, 51

—**to lay or take to heart**. To grieve over or about, be greatly concerned about.

—**to lose heart**. To become discouraged —**to lose one's heart**. To fall in love.

—**to pluck up heart**. To take courage —**to set the heart at rest**. To become satisfied or tranquilized in mind —**to set the heart on or upon**. To become intensely desirous of —**to take heart**. To take courage, to become hopeful

*Took heart again*, and faced it out,

As if they meant to stand it out

BUTLER *Hudibras* I, iii, 35

The phrase is sometimes expanded to **take heart of grace** which means, to pluck up courage. Originally it meant "to take courage as through indulgence, favor or signs of friendliness."

The peasants who at first shrunk from him in horror . . . took *heart of grace* as he got to a distance  
SCOTT *Quentin Durward* VI

—to take the heart out of. To discourage one as by continuous faultfinding, oppressive tactics, etc.—to take to heart. 1. To feel keenly, be seriously affected by, grieve over. 2. To be zealous, solicitous, or ardent about

Though I did not cry and take it to heart as some do . . . yet I missed him all day.  
long LAMB *Essays of Elia, Dream Children*

—to wear one's heart on one's sleeve. See TO CARRY or WEAR ONE'S HEART ON ONE'S SLEEVE, above—wandering heart. A heart that is phenomenally mobile.  
—with all one's heart. Intensely, thoroughly, completely, wholly

**heartsease.** 1. The pansy.

She stole through the garden, where *heart's-ease* was growing MOORE *Ill Omens* iii.

2. Freedom from care; peace of mind; happiness.

In mere wantonness and *heart's-ease* I was for buffeting the moon

RICHARDSON *Clarissa* III, iii, 32.

**Heavens!** An exclamation indicating astonishment, horror, etc.: often used with *great, good, gracious*.

*Heavens!* Emily, what an idea!

MRS MARCET *Conv Nat Philos* II, 360.

*Good Heavens!* cried Mr Glanville . . . quite out of patience, I shall go distracted.  
MRS LENNOX *Fem Quixote* VIII, iii, ii, 187.

**heavy in or on hand.** Slow and lumbering; sluggish, as a horse that bears his weight on the bit.

Poor Bella! how *heavy on hand* she will find him.

G LAWRENCE *Guy Livingstone* XI, 106.

**Hebe.** [Brit.] The goddess of youth and cup-bearer to the gods; hence, a barnmaid or a waiting maid at an inn.

Wreathed smiles

Such as hang on *Hebe's* cheek,

And love to live in duple sleek.

MILTON *L'Allegro*.

**heck and manger, at.** In easy circumstances; in comfort and plenty; in clover.

**hedge-hopping.** See quotation.

*Hedge-hopping* is the fanciful name for flying low [in aviation].

*The Independent* New York, Nov. 16, 1918.

**heel or heels** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases; as, **down at heels.**

Presenting a seedy or slovenly appearance.—**heels foremost or forward.** With feet first, as a corpse borne out of a house

He was clapt in prison, and came not out but with his *heels forward*

G H *Hist of the Cardinals* II, ii, 147.

—**the heel of Achilles.** The only vulnerable part in allusion to the story of Achilles who, when his mother Thetis dipped him into the Styx to make him invulnerable, was held by the heel and the water did not touch it—to be at, or on, or upon the heels of. To follow closely, as, change is at the heels of Fortune—to cool or kick one's heels. To be made to wait attending the convenience of another; to wait idly and impatiently—to have or get the heels of. To travel faster than; outrun—to kick or turn up one's heels. To die

He strake him with his bullet full in the forehead, and with all turned up his *heels*.

HOLINSHED *Chron Isl* III, 293.

—to lay by the heels. To fetter or hobble, put in the stocks, place under restraint. The lord chief justice . . . will lay the undersheriff by the heels

LUTFRELL *Brief Rel* IV, 638.

—to lift or raise the heel against. To prepare to crush or trample down, overwhelm.  
—to show the heels, to take to one's heels. To take to flight, flee.

The rabble incontinently took to their heels

WASHINGTON IRVING *Knickerbocker* VII, xii.

—to tread on one's heels. To follow closely the lead of, imitate a leader  
**heeled, well.** [U. S.] Well armed; well provided with money; a phrase from the cockpit, where to heel a bird was to arm it with gaffs.

**heeler.** [U. S. Pol.] A follower of a professional politician or organization; the henchman of a boss, frequently a member of a gang.

**heel-taps.** [Brit.] A remnant of liquor left in the bottom of a glass.

The relics of yesterday's feast—the emptied bottles . . . the wretched *heel-taps* that have been lying exposed all night to the air THACKERAY *Newcomes* XIV

**heifer.** A wife.

Her whom I shall choose for my *heifer*

BEN JONSON *Silent Woman* act II, sc 5

—**heifer-paddock.** [Australian] A ladies' school

The cattle hereabouts are too scattered . . . Next year I shall look over a *heifer-paddock* in Sydney, and take my pick MRS CAMPBELL-PRAED *Australian Life*.

**hell,** when used as an imprecation or an expression of anger, impatience, or irritation, is a vulgarity.

**hell-box.** In a printing-office, a receptacle into which the devil (printer's boy), or any of his seniors, throws battered type, broken rules, and other metal for re-melting.

**hello-girl.** [U. S.] A telephone operator: a slang term.

The awful nuisance of the Central [telephone] office, and . . . what is familiarly known as the "*hello girl*." THE CRITIC London, April 6, 1895.

**help.** [U. S.] The Yankee phrase for servants, male or female.

My *help* will be standin' on her head by this time, like enough

ATLANTIC MONTHLY, Nov. 1860.

**helter-skelter.** In a disorderly and hurried manner; with haste and confusion.

Away they run, pell-mell, *helter-skelter*, slap-dash.

DICKENS *Oliver Twist*, 42.

**hen.** [Brit.] A woman; especially a wife or mistress humorous.

But if I go and say to my old *hen* I'll mind the gentry's boats and keep discreet

G. MEREDITH *Old Chartist*.

**hen-party.** An assemblage of women only.

**hen-pecked.** Ruled by a woman: said of husbands who are dominated by their wives.

Socrates . . . by all accounts undoubted head of the sect of the *hen-pecked*.

STEELE *The Spectator* 479 (1712).

**hens on a rainy day, to sell one's.** To make a bad bargain, dispose of one's goods at a disadvantage.

I'll warrant we'll never see him *sell his hen on a rainy day* I have seen him buy such bargains as would amaze one.

GOLDSMITH *Vicar of Wakefield* XII.

**here and there.** In one place and another; so as to be irregularly scattered.

Touching the gloomy waves *here and there* with streaks of pale light.

—**neither here nor there.** Foreign to the subject under discussion, unimportant; irrelevant

What I say is *neither here nor there*

BYRON *Don Juan* I, 1, 1

—**here's to.** A dedicatory phrase used in toast-drinking, as, *here's to* your health

**hern and hisn.** [U. S.] Ancient forms of the possessive now extinct in Great Britain except as dialect in the south and English midlands, but surviving in rural parts of the United States.

Restore thou to him all things that ben *hern*.

WYCLIF 2 *Kings* viii, 6.

So there were *his'n*, and *her'n*, and *their'n* you see

VERNEY *L. Lisle* viii (1870).

He was *her'n* and she was *his'n*

Ever *her'n* and ever *his'n*,

*Her'n* and *his'n*, now and ever,

Each one wishing for our hero

Yale Literary Magazine vol. XXI, p. 231.

**Herod, to out-Herod.** To outdo; specifically, to excel in ranting.

I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod:  
pray you avoid it. SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act iii, sc. 2.

**herring or a whale, to throw a sprat to catch a.** To forego a slight advantage in the hope of greater profit.

**herring-pond.** [Brit.] The North Atlantic Ocean.

Easier rents and taxes will tempt many of your countrymen to cross the *herring-pond*.  
*England's Path to Wealth*, 1722.

**hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may.** Stick to your task and never mind the consequences; carry out your orders and don't worry over trifles.

The Secretary [Major Thomas Peters] proceeded to *hew to the line*, and utterly disregarded the falling of the chips.

*Quarter Centennial History of The South Eastern Tariff Association*, p. 54.

**hic jacet.** [L.] "Here lies": inscribed on tombstones: hence, a tombstone or its inscription.

The cold *Hic Jacets* of the dead.

TENNYSON *Vivien*, st. 31.

**hick.** [U. S.] A countryman; one who lives apart from city life; a rube.  
—**hick-town.** A country-town.

**hickory cloth, shirt, etc.** Clothing dyed with hickory-juice.

**hide-and-seek.** Evade an issue or a question: adopted from a game played by children in which one or more hide and the rest seek them.

**hidebound.** Narrow minded; cramped; hence, partizan; bigoted; immovable; obstinate.

I am as barren and *hidebound* as one of your scribbling poets, who are sots in company for all their wit. WYCHERLY *Love in a Wood* act 1, sc. 2.

**higgledy-piggledy.** Mixed together in confusion; all together, as hogs and pigs lie; topsy-turvy, at sixes and sevens, in confusion.

"If some of you will sit down," remonstrated Judith, "I'll pour the tea. But I don't feel as if anybody wanted it while you're standing around *higgledy-piggledy*."

M. E. BRADDON *Joshua Haggard* XVI.

**high** is used in the following idiomatic phrases:—**high and dry.** Completely out of water, as bathing-machines on an English beach or fishing-boats hauled above tide-water: also stranded, as a vessel cast ashore by a storm.

—**high and low.** Everywhere, up and down, wholly, entirely —**high and mighty.** Arrogant, imperious, proud.

None of your *high and mighty* games with me. N GOULD *Double Event*, 121.

—**high-ball.** [U. S.] An American drink of whisky and carbonated water, served in a tall glass with ice and a slice of lemon —**High-binder.** [U. S. Journalese] 1.

A Chinese organization in the United States for purposes of oppression, etc. 2. A rowdy or gangster (q. v.)

The *High-Binders* were already on his track, and he scarcely feels safe, even in Oakland. *American Missionary*, August, 1883.

—**highbrow.** [U. S.] 1. A person of superior mental endowments; an intellectual Pharisee. 2. A poseur in art or literature —**Highflier.** One who maintained the doctrine of passive obedience to authority in the 17th century: characterized by an extreme and bigoted attitude —**high flier or roller.** One who lives a fast life: also, a male or female dandy —**high jinks.** An old Scotch game of forfeits, in which one was chosen by lot to perform a task, hence, rough sports or jollification.

The frolicsome company had begun to practise the ancient and now forgotten pastime of *high jinks*. SCOTT *Guy Mannering* XXXVI.

—**high-low.** A shoe, the upper of which reaches up to and covers the ankle —**high, low, Jack and the game.** [Card-playing] Points in the game of seven-up, or the game itself, which is sometimes called *old sledge* and *all-fours* —**high-stepper.** [U. S.] One who acts energetically and carries himself with distinction: a term applied originally to a horse of spirited action and high-step. Sometimes used invidiously. —**high**

**tea.** [Brit.] A meal at which meat is served as well as tea, bread and butter, cake, etc.; an evening meal of solid food

For people who are not in the habit of giving dinner parties, *high tea* is a capital institution *The Girls' Own Paper*, May, 1884.

—**high (or full) time.** The expiration or a time past the expiration of the period when something ought to have been done, as, it is *high time* you paid that bill.

It is *High Time* for every Englishman to exert himself on behalf of his country.

STEELE *Englishman* No. 42.

—**high-toned.** Dignified in manners, morals, superior in culture or mentality

It is contended that the public sentiment within each of those schools is *high-toned* and manly

EMERSON *English Traits* II, 92.

—**high words.** Language used in anger, rebuke, or otherwise emotionally.—**on high.** In a high place, especially in heaven

We whose souls are lighted,

With wisdom from *on high*

BISHOP HERER *Hymn*.

—**on one's high horse.** Behaving pretentiously or arrogantly said of one affecting superiority

I expect reverses and disasters, and that Great Britain, now *on the high horse*, will dismount again

F AMES *Works* vol I, p 339 (1805).

—**the man higher up.** [U. S.] The head or chief of an organized system of blackmail to whom the greater part of graft goes, and who is seldom reached in investigations, but often referred to in print—to **get on or mount the high horse.** To assume a lofty, arrogant, or self-sufficient tone or bearing

"Miss Rachel has her faults—I've never denied it," he began, "and *riding the high horse* now and then is one of them"

WILKIE COLLINS *Moonstone*

—**to run high.** To show clearly, as feelings; come into evidence strongly.

**highfalutin.** I. *a.* High flown in manner or speech; bombastic; as, a *highfalutin* orator. II. *n.* High-sounding language or writing; bombastic speech; fustian.

His enemies have done their best to enlighten her as to the hollowness of his *highfalutin* professions

Edinburgh *Review*, 1882

A good human bit of writing . . . not so *highfalutin* (let me use the odious word) as the modern style

LOWELL *Study Windows*, 36.

**hike.** A long country walk or military march.

**hill o' beans, not worth a.** [U. S.] Not worth much; of small importance.

He didn't amount to a *hill o' beans* as a citizen

W N HARBEN *The Georgians*, 76.

**hinges, off the.** Out of working order; in a state of confusion.

**hip, on the.** In one's hip-pocket, as a flask.—**to have or catch on the hip.** To have or get the advantage of: in allusion to a wrestlers' trick.

**hired girl or man.** [U. S.] Paid help for household work or farm-duties.

**hit** is used idiomatically in the following phrases:—**to hit it off.** To be agreeable to one another; show friendliness of disposition; have similar tastes; agree.

It is not always the case that the master, or warden, or provost, or principal can *hit it off* exactly with his tutor

TROLLOPE *Barchester Towers* xxxiv.

—**to hit off.** 1. To express or describe briefly and exactly, express cleverly 2. To improvise, as, to *hit off* a poem 3. To come upon, discover, as, the pack *hit off* the scent.

It was not the first time a woman had *hit off* a grand idea

KINGSLEY *Water Babies*, 187.

—**to hit out.** To strike straight from the shoulder; fight vigorously, also, to retaliate. A member [of Parliament] should *hit out* seldom but *hit hard*

C E PAGET *Autobiog* VI, 188.

—**to hit the nail on the head.** To speak to the point, strike the mark; attain the objective

He was rash . . . *hitting the nail on the head* sometimes.

MRS. GASKELL *Wives and Dons*.

—to hit the pipe. [U S.] To smoke opium a slang phrase —to hit upon. To discover by accident, light upon, meet with, get at, attain to, reach one's aim, succeed. Hypothesis after hypothesis until the right one is at length *hit upon*

SAYCE *Comparative Philology* II, 69.

—to make a hit. To make a success, to score, to excel, to profit.  
Nor yet did the heiress herself omit  
The acts that help to *make a hit*.

THOMAS HOOD *Poems*.

**hither and thither.** In this place and that; to and fro; in various directions.

**hobby, to mount or ride a.** To discuss or pursue a favorite subject, especially with frequency or persistence.

**hobnob.** To be intimate with, as a good companion; associate familiarly; drink freely with. Used also as a phrase **hob nob**, connoting "have or have not," "hit or miss," "at a venture," "rashly off-hand." By Shakespeare it is used to connote reciprocity or a disposition to give as much as one is ready to receive

Satisfaction can be none but by pangs of death, and sepulcher *Hob, nob, is his word give it or take it*

SHAKESPEARE *Twelfth Night* act III, sc 4

**hobo.** [U. S.] A shiftless worker or itinerant laborer; a tramp: distinguished from *yegg* (q. v.).

The tramp's name for himself and his fellows is *hobo*, plural *hoboes*

J. FLYNT in *Contemporary Review*, Aug., 1891.

**Hobson's choice.** The opportunity to take the first thing offered or nothing: from Tobias Hobson, a livery-stable keeper of Cambridge, England, who always gave his customers the horse nearest the door—the first or none  
Where to elect there is but one

'Tis *Hobson's choice*, take that or none WARD *Eng Reform*, 326.

**hock.** 1. [Brit.] Rhine wine. Corruption of Hochheimer, a white wine from Hochheim near Mainz, Germany. 2. In faro, the last card in the box.

**hock.** [U. S.] Pawn.—in **hock.** In prison; also in pawn.

**hocus-pocus.** A simple pass or other act of dexterity by a conjurer done so deftly as to deceive the eye; a conjurer's trick, or a deception wrought as if by the conjurer's art, a juggler. Sometimes used adjectively —to **hocus-pocus.** To practise deception, as in jugglery, deceive dextrously

If thou hast any *hocus-pocus* tricks to play, why canst thou not do them here?

These insurgent legions which by the sudden *hocus pocus* of political affairs,  
**are transformed into loyal soldiers** WASHINGTON IRVING *Life and Letters* III, 300.

S A M—M U M, Magic, Unity and Might,

That's the code that rules to-night,

S A M—M U M, *Hocus Pocus*, Conjurokus, M U M'

*Slogan of The Society of American Magicians.*

**hoe-cake.** [U. S.] A cake made of corn-meal (maize), salt and water, which could be baked on a hoe.

**hoe-down.** [U. S.] A negro dance combining the features of the jig and reel.

**hog and hominy.** [U. S.] Pork and the whole grain of corn (maize) hulled and boiled and served in any one of several ways.

**hoist with or by one's own petard.** Suffering from the consequences of one's designs on others: caught in one's own trap; involved in danger meant for others.

For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer

*Hoist with his own petard.*

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act III, sc. 4.

**hoity-toity.** Petulant or fussy; fancying oneself.

Those who are all *hoity toity*, up in arms perpetually, for this or that diversion of a purely external sort, are certainly defective in other resources

AUGUSTA LARNED *Talks with Girls*, 50.

**hokey-pokey.** [Brit.] 1. Hocus-pocus. 2. A brick of ice-cream of variously flavored layers sold by street vendors.

**hokum.** [U. S.] A word, an act, a piece of "business" or property used by an actor at a psychological moment to win an audience.

**hold** is used in the following idiomatic phrases:—**hold by.** Adhere to; esteem; approve of.—**hold or hang by the eye-lashes, lids or brows.** To hold on in desperation, cling with forlorn hope

*Holding on with his eyelids* Said of a man aloft with nothing much to lay hold of.

CLARK RUSSELL *Sailor's Language*, 69.

—**hold forth.** Express one's views; speak in public, harangue, preach  
Nature is a silent preacher which *holds forth* upon week days as upon Sabbaths

DOYLE *Muah Clarke* XXII.

—**hold good.** Remain in full force and effect —**hold in check.** Restrain, confine; stop

We should find difficulty in supplying an army of eight thousand men at Kandahar, which would be sufficient to *hold in check* the advance of one hundred thousand Russians from the Caucasus

*Fortnightly Review*, 1887

—**hold in play.** Keep occupied or employed —**hold off.** Keep at a distance, refrain from intimacy or intercourse —**hold on.** Grip fast, hold tight —**hold one's own.** Maintain one's position, as in a contest, lose no ground —**hold on like grim death.** [U. S.] Tenacious

The office-holders *held on like grim death* until they became imbecile from age

MR. JOHNSON of Tenn. House of Reps., May 31, 1848

—**hold the stage, or the lime-light.** [Theatrical] To have attention of one's audience —**hold water.** Be capable of undergoing careful inspection, be logically sound or consistent, as an argument

Now whether Sludge's story would succeed in *holding water*.

Is more, perhaps, than any one has business to expect

JAMES B. STEPHENS *Universally Respected*, st. 27.

—**hold with the hare and hunt with the hounds.** Keep on good terms with two conflicting parties, double-cross both sides, play a double game —**hold your horses.** [U. S.] Take it easily, don't get excited, be calm and go slowly —**to hold out.** 1. To stretch forth, promise, offer 2. To be constant in action, opposition, or resistance, keep up exertions, survive, last, as, if that man *holds out* our crew will win the race. 3 To insist, maintain 4. *Law* To represent 5. To debar

(3) *Holding out* that the lady was a Duchess

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* XIII

**hold-up.** [U. S.] Robbery with violence; extortion by means of political or financial pressure.

**hole** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases:—**a round peg in a square hole.** A person who does not fit in with his surroundings or is not suited to his occupation.

The Admiralty would not rescind their orders, so we were a *round man in a square hole*, and vice versa

LORD C. E. PAGET *Autobiography* III, 72

—**in a hole.** In a tight box, in a difficult position, in a fix

I'm *in a hole*—no end of a hole, and I thought you'd help me

QUIDA *Under Two Flags* i, 6

—**in the hole.** [Sports] Be set back a phrase in card games meaning either that the player has made a minus score, or has lost his stake —**to make a hole in.** To eat up one's resources; reduce the amount of, said of income, savings, etc —**to make a hole in the water.** [Brit.] To commit suicide by drowning —**hole-and-corner.** Surreptitious, underhand, clandestine, as, a *hole-and-corner* policy

**holy water.** Water consecrated by a priest and used for lustral and ritual purposes.

**home** is used idiomatically in the following phrases:—**at home**. 1. Unconstrained or unreserved, as in one's own house; at ease; as, to feel *at home*.

2. Having a thorough knowledge of, conversant with, as, *at home* on a subject. 3. Prepared to receive callers; often used substantively, in the sense of a reception.

The Marchioness of Steyne would be *at home* to Mr Arthur Pendennis upon a given day

THACKERAY *Pendennis* XLI.

—**home-bird**. [Brit.] A hen-pecked swain.—**home blow, thrust, or appeal**. A blow, thrust, or appeal that goes straight to the point or mark, a personal or direct appeal.—**home-brew**. Any liquor, malt or otherwise, made at home for home consumption

You can have some *home-brew*, if you want to, you know

THOMAS HARDY *Mayor of Carterbridge*, i 119.

—**home truth**. The very truth, as from the heart of the family, household truth. —**one's long home**. The grave

Man goeth to his *long home*, and the mourners go about the streets. *Ecclesiastes* xii, 5.

—**to bring oneself home**. To break even; recover a loss; neither to win nor lose; come out quits

The bookseller is at once, to use a technical term, *brought home*, all his outlay being repaid

SCOTT *The Abbot*, Introduction

—**to bring a charge home to**. To convict (a person) of

The charge is not *brought home* to William

FREEMAN *Norman Conquest* III, xii, 208

—**to make oneself at home**. To take one's ease. In the United States the phrase is frequently used as an invitation of hospitality, and in British usage in an ironical sense meaning familiarity to the point of ill-breeding.—**to touch home**. To reach a vital spot, also, to give a mortal wound to

**homeling**. A native or resident of some definite place.

**homely**. 1. Plain in appearance to the point of ugliness.

I said, she is not tall, she is short; she is not beautiful, she is *homely*.

MARK TWAIN *New Pilgrim's Progress* XIX.

2. Belonging to the home; intimate; domestic.

A dear little *homely* woman.

MRS. CARLYLE *Letters* III, 155

**honest**. Open and undisguised.—**honest as the skin between his brows**. Free from dissimulation; strictly honest.

An old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt, as, God help, I would desire they were, but in faith *honest as the skin between his brows*

SHAKESPEARE *Much Ado About Nothing* act iii, sc. 5

—**Honest Indian!** [U S] In very truth an asseveration of sincerity, equivalent to "honor bright"

She says '*Honest Injun*, now haint you been telling me a lot of lies?' '*Honest Injun*,' says I

MARK TWAIN *Huckleberry Finn*.

—**to make an honest woman of**. To marry a woman with whom one has cohabited.

**honey**. Sweetheart; darling; beloved: a term of endearment.

He may se Alisoun, his *hony* deere

CHAUCER *The Miller's Tale* 431.

**honor** is used idiomatically in the following phrases:—**affair of honor**.

A duel.—**debt of honor**. A gambling debt the payment of which depends on the uprightness of its contractor.—**honor bright**. An adverbial expletive used to emphasize an affirmation, or, if used interrogatively, to question its truth.—**honors of war**. Marks of respect or concessions granted to a capitulating force.—**honors rested with**. Success attended (him or her); said of the victor in a debate or competition; or of one who has distinguished himself.—**maids of honor**. See under **MAIDS**.—**peace with honor**. See under **PEACE**.—**point of honor**. A matter that involves one's integrity.—**to do the honors**. To act as host or hostess.

The Prince *did the honors* of the castle to Vivian with great courtesy.

DISRAELI *Vivian Grey* VI.



**hooch.** [U. S.] Contraband alcoholic beverages; especially those of home manufacture, whether beer, wine or spirits. The word is a contraction of the Amerind *hoochnoo*. See quotation.

Among the Indians of the extreme north there is a liquor made which . . . is called *hoochnoo*. The ingredients . . . are simple and innocent, being only yeast, flour, and either sugar or molasses

EDWARD R. EMERSON *Beverages, Past and Present* p 444 (1908).

**hoodlum.** [U. S.] A rowdy, rough, larrikin, street loafer: a term of the California coast said to have been formed through a misreading of *N* for *h* in a reporter's account of some rioting that occurred in 1868 in San Francisco in which one named *Muldoon* (inverted *hoodlum*) was leader

**hoodman-blind.** Blind-man's buff.

What devil was't

That thus hath cozen'd you at *hoodman blind*?

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act iii, sc 4.

**hoodoo.** To bring bad luck to; exercise an evil influence over; bewitch.

The term is not identical with *voodoo* (q. v) which is always used as a noun. *Hoodoo* is sometimes used as a noun, and may even mean a *hant* (q. v), but it is usually employed as a verb

The coterie . . . that *hoodooed* the Wilson bill *The Watertown Times*, Nov. 9, 1896.

**hoodwink.** I. *n.* A game resembling hoodman-blind. II. *v.* To deceive, as by disguise; impose upon.

**hoof it, to.** To go afoot.—**on the hoof.** Alive: said of cattle.—to beat or pad the hoof. To tramp; also, to walk away; beat it.—to show the cloven hoof. See under *CLOVEN*.

**hook.** To secure by artifice; ensnare.

I wonder if Mrs Traff has contrived to *hook* him for her sweet Laura.

J S WINTER *Army Society* XVIII.

—by hook or by crook. By any means, fair or foul

Farmer & Henley in "Slang and Its Analogues" cite the following "d 1298 THOMAS THE RHYMER *On Parliaments*. Their work was *by hook or crook* to rap and bring all under the emperor's power" But Skelton is quoted by Sir James A H Murray as containing the first instance of use (date 1529)

Nor wyll suffre this boke

*By hoke or by croke* Prynted to be

*Colin Cloute* 1240.

—off the hooks. Out of temper, disturbed, vexed —on one's own hook. On one's own account, independently of others —to drop, go or pop off the hooks. To die, go aloft, pass away —to hook it, or to take or sling one's hook. [Brit] To run off, decamp, skedaddle.

**hookey, to play.** [U. S.] To play truant; be absent without leave.

**Hoosier.** A native or resident of the State of Indiana: a nickname that has been variously explained but the origin of which is lost.

**hop.** 1. Small and early dance of informal character.

To dance with blouzy housemaids at the regimental hops

KIPLING *Barrack Room Ballads, Gentlemen Rankers*.

2. [U. S.] A page; buttons: a contraction of bell-hop, a lad who springs forward at the sound of a bell.

**horizontal tariff.** [U. S. Pol.] An import tax fixing a uniform or flat rate.

**horn.** [Biblical.] Strength, power, or honor: used symbolically.

Mine *horn* is exalted in the Lord

1 Sam ii, 1

—horn of plenty. The cornucopia, symbolizing peace and prosperity —horns of a dilemma. Alternatives, either of which is unpleasant.

—to draw in one's horns. To cool down, withdraw or retract —to lower one's horns. To humiliate or lower oneself, condescend —to pull in one's horns. To check oneself or retract

I began to pull in my horns, as they say

RICHARDSON *Pamela* I 115

—old in the horn. [Scot.] Beyond middle age, old, hence, experienced —spouting horn. A cave with an opening through a cliff-top, through which the sea casts spray —to come out at the little end of the horn. To fail or come to grief after boasting or making great promises

How did you make it? You didn't come out at the little end of the horn, did you?

PORTER *Quarter Race* 24.

—to show one's horns. To show one's evil or mischievous nature, in allusion to the horns as attributes of Pan and of the devil

**hornets'-nest, to stir up a.** To provoke hostility or awaken adverse criticism; rouse, as by inflaming the passions; cause a commotion by raising trouble or harass with annoyances.

Proudie, ass as he is, knows the world too well to get such a hornets' nest about his ears

TROLLOPE *Barchester Towers* XIV.

**horn-spoon! by the great.** A ludicrous and meaningless oath of unknown origin but found in James Russell Lowell's *Biglow Papers*.

**horrors, the.** 1. A state of extreme depression; the blues. 2. Delirium tremens.

(1) As you promise our stay shall be short, if I don't die of the horrors, I shall try to make the agreeable

MISS FERRIER *Marriage* III.

(2) He does drink, of course . . . the worst of it is that too much of it brings on the horrors

BOLDREWOOD *Robbery under Arms* 3.

**horse of another color.** Something of a character that differs from that considered, akin to but markedly different from something else.

This identical issue is now presented, only the horse is of another color

MR MORRILL of Vt. Speech in House of Representatives, June 28, 1856.

—a horse on one. A jest at one's expense or a disadvantageous turn in one's affairs.

—a horse that was foaled on an acorn. A gibbet, a scaffold

As pretty a Tyburn blossom as ever was brought up to ride a horse foaled by an acorn.

LYTTON *Pelham* vol III, p 296.

—dead horse. See under DEAD —flying horse. Pegasus the winged horse of the Muses —hard horse. In the merchant marine, a tyrannical officer —horse and foot. Cavalry and infantry regiments, hence, figuratively, with full force or with all one's strength —horse and horse. [U. S.] 1. Equally divided, one as good, or as bad, as the other 2. A game, especially of dice-throwing, in which the winner must gain a majority of points When the number of points is even the players are "horse and horse," that is, on an even basis —horse balm. A plant of the mint family —horse-bean. A large bean fed to horses —horse-billiards. The game of shovelboard as played on shipboard —horse-bread, horse-loaf. Bread made of beans, corn-meal wheat kneaded with water and barm and baked into loaves —horse-crab. A king-crab, the horse-shoe crab —horse-daisy. The oxeye daisy —horse-devil. A ball-like bushy mass of herb that grows in the pine-woods of Florida and South Carolina, and when dead is blown about by the wind along the roads causing horses to shy —horse-fiddle. A packing chest with rosin-edged across which a rail is drawn and so produce sound —horse, foot, and dragons. The entire army, hence, the crowd, adverbially, without exception, unanimously —horse-godmother. A coarse masculine woman —horse-latitudes. A belt of the Atlantic ocean where calms often prevail so called in colonial times when vessels carrying horses from New England to the West Indies were sometimes obliged, when detained there, to throw overboard part of their cargo for want of water —horse-laugh. A loud, boisterous laugh

He plays rough pranks, too . . . and has a big horse-laugh in him where there is a fop to be roasted, or the like

CARLYLE *Frederick* vol 1, bk IV, 305.

—horse-leech. 1. One who lives on or at the expense of another, an inveterate beggar, a parasite 2. A veterinary 3. A large-sized, blood-sucking aquatic worm.

—horse-marine. A person who is out of place, one as much out of his element as a marine mounted on horseback would be on board ship, anyone not fit for the place he

occupies —**horse-milliner**. A dealer in decoration for horses or for the harness —**horse-pistol**. A large pistol carried in a holster by horsemen —**horse-play**. Rough, boisterous or coarse play

Mr. Phelps succeeded in stopping the *horse-play* and coarseness of audiences

*Westminster Review* cxxv, 581.

—**horse sense**. [U S] Instinctive common sense, sound judgment, practical wisdom.—**horse's-neck**. Ginger-ale and lemon with or without whisky.—**Irish horse**. Tough unpalatable corned beef sailors' name.—**salt horse**. Salt beef sailors' name.—**to change or swap horses when crossing a stream**. To run the risk of disaster by making a change under hazardous conditions.—**to flog the dead horse**. To try to arouse fresh interest in a dead question or subject. See also **DEAD HORSE** under **DEAD**

Friends warned him (R. Cobden) that he was *flogging a dead horse*

MORLEY in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

—**to get on or mount the high horse**. See under **HIGH** —**to horse**. An order to mount —**to put the cart before the horse**. See under **CART** —**to take horse**. To set out, travel or go riding on horseback 2. To split into branches, as a vein of ore in a mine

**host, to count or reckon without** (formerly, **before**) **one's**. To come to a conclusion without careful consideration of the results: from reckoning the cost of an entertainment without consulting the landlord.

**hot** is used idiomatically in the following phrases: **hot and heavy**.

Fast and furious; severe; with might and main; vigorously, violently.

—**hot as they make them**. [Brit.] Reckless, careless, boisterous —**hot o' the spur**. Eagerly, earnestly, with every speed —**hotbed**. A place where something is fostered and developed with care and rapidity chiefly used in a bad sense, as, a *hotbed* of sedition —**hot-cockles**. An old English Christmas game in which a blindfolded player is struck by others in turn, and tries to guess their names.

Thus poets passing time away,

Like children at *hot-cockles* play,

All strike by turn, and Will is strook,

(And he lies down that writes a book)

Lines from GONDBERT 2d ed, p. 23.

—**hot-dog**. [U S] A sausage supposed to be made of equal parts of chopped beef and pork Used, recently, without any special significance, as an expletive —**hotfoot**. In all haste

Chaplain Bob, who was by, at once dispatched a boy, *hot foot*, for Johnson.

II MELVILLE *Omoo* ch. 50, p. 243

—**hothouse**. 1. A chamber or drying-room heated artificially, also, a structure for the care or propagation of plants, flowers or fruits 2. A bath-house or sweating-room hence, a brothel —**in hot blood**. See under **BLOOD** —**to be in hot water**. To be in trouble as through strife, in difficulties, or in a vexatious or embarrassing position —**to drop like a hot potato**. To abandon suddenly, as a person or enterprise —**to go like hot cakes**. See under **CAKE** —**to get into or keep in hot water**. To get into trouble or difficulties, or to be kept in them, to worry or keep worried

The *Times* was first printed by steam, 1814, and has *kept* the country in *hot water* ever since

*Punch's Almanach*, Nov. 28, 1846.

**hour** is used idiomatically in the following phrases:—**after hours**. After the time of one's regular employment.—**at the eleventh hour**. At the last moment, just in time

Rescued by the interference, *at the eleventh hour*, of a French partisan of the Indians.

IRVING *Washington* I, 376

—**in an evil hour**. At an unfortunate time —**in a good hour, in good hour**. At the right time; opportunely —**long hours**. The hours, like ten, eleven, and twelve, that require the greatest number of strokes of the clock —**lunar hours**. One of the twenty-four hours that complete a lunar day —**morning hour**. In the Congress of the United States, the hour after the reading of the journal —**short hours**. The hours, like two and three, that require few strokes of the clock —**sidereal hour, solar hour**. A twenty-fourth part of a sidereal or solar day.—**the hour**. The present occasion;

present time, or the time in question; as, extravagance ruled *the hour*.—**the small hours**. The early morning hours

Conversation is prolonged to midnight or even to *the small hours*.

W G PALGREAVE *Arabia* II, 335.

—**to keep bad hours**. To sit up wasting health or substance until the early hours of morning —**to keep good hours**. To retire to rest early.

**house** occurs in the following idiomatic terms:—**black house**, a rude stone house seen in the islands of Lewis and Harris and sometimes in Scotland, without windows, accommodating both the family and the domestic animals. —**change-house**. [Scot.] A tippling-house, ale-house —**disorderly house**. A house of ill fame or any low resort, a brothel —**half-way house**. 1. An inn or resting-place half-way along a route. 2. Hence, a half-way point in progress of any sort —**house-ball**. A game in which a ball thrown against a wall or house by one player is batted by another player when it rebounds —**house-boat**, *n*. 1. A covered boat fitted up as a dwelling, or a boat with a deck-cabin suitable for a dwelling, a floating dwelling. 2. In China, a private boat kept for the use of a commercial house —**housebound**. Compelled to stay in the house, as by indisposition, confined to the house —**house of call**. [Brit. Colloq.] A house where journeymen of a particular trade assemble, or where various persons in request may be heard of

I shall feel like a last man in London without my morning 'house-of-call' in Hart street.

DARWIN *Life and Lett.* 1. 345.

—**house-chambermaid**. A servant who performs the duties of a housemaid and a chambermaid —**house-club**. [Eng.] A club organized for various purposes, particularly athletics, and composed exclusively of the members and employees of one business concern —**house-farmer**. [Eng.] One who hires buildings with the intention of subletting them —**housefast**. [Local, Eng.] Confined to or forced to stay in a house housebound —**household stuff**. The goods and chattels of a family —

**household suffrage**. [Gt. Brit.] The right of a householder to vote for members of Parliament conceded in 1867-1868, extended in 1884. Called also **household franchise** —**household word**. A well-known name or saying —**household troops**. [Gt. Brit.] The troops detailed for the especial protection of the sovereign and metropolis. They consist of three cavalry regiments (the 1st and 2d Life Guards and the Royal Horse Guards), and three of foot (the Grenadier, Coldstream, and Scots Guards) —**house master**. [Eng.] A master having charge over the pupils in one of the houses or halls of a public school —**house master**. The master of a household.

—**house of cards**. An immaterial or unsubstantial structure —**House of Commons**. The lower house of parliament —**House of Delegates**. [U S.] 1. The lower house in several States, as in Virginia. 2. The lower house of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church —**house of detention**. [U S.] A place in which witnesses in a criminal trial are occasionally detained pending such trial, when there is reason to believe that they may fail to appear if allowed at large —**house of eternity**, of graves. A Jewish graveyard —**house of God**, of prayer, of the Lord, of worship. Any place of worship —**house of ill fame**. A house of prostitution —

**House of Keys**, the representative branch of the legislative body of the Isle of Man, consisting of 24 members chosen by popular vote from among persons of certain property qualifications —**house of life**. Same as **HOUSE OF ETERNITY** —**House of Lords**. The house of peers or upper house of the British Parliament —**house of mercy**. 1. A charitable institution for the assistance of persons in distress, specif., a home for fallen women. 2. A hospital —**house of refuge**. 1. A charitable institution providing refuge and assistance for the homeless and destitute. 2. [U S.] A house on the seashore occupied by a man in the employ of the life-saving service and equipped with boats, provisions, restoratives, etc —**House of Representatives**. The lower house of the United States Congress —**house-raising**. [U S.] A gathering of neighbors to assist in raising a house-frame —**house-wagon**. A wagon having a habitable superstructure upon it, and used as a dwelling by a party of travelers; a caravan —**house-wrecker**. [U S.] One who pulls down old buildings and disposes of the materials —**like a house on fire**. Very quickly, as fast as a house that is on fire would burn —**lower house**. The more popular or more frequently chosen branch of a legislative body, as the House of Representatives in the United States; or the House of Commons in England —**safe as houses**. [Brit.] Absolutely safe —**to bring down the house**. [Theat.] To evoke general and loud applause; win the approval of all persons present, score a success. —**to keep a good house**. —**To**

provide well, as for a family or for guests—to **keep house**. 1. To maintain an independent home 2. To have charge of household affairs 3. [Eng.] To remain at home to escape one's creditors: equivalent to an admission of bankruptcy—to **keep open house**. To entertain freely

Sir Roger always *keeps open house* at Christmas ADDISON *Spectator* 269.  
—to **keep the house**. To be confined within doors as by illness

**housetops, to cry or proclaim from or upon the**. To announce publicly, in an open manner.

And that which you have spoken in the ear in closets shall be *proclaimed upon the housetops* St Luke xii 3

**how** [U. S.] A form of salutation the equivalent of "*How* are you?" by the American Indians of the Northwest and sometimes used by the palefaces. Hence, **here's how?** A salutation or toast in drinking

**how** [U. S.] In what manner; by what means, etc.—**how are you?** What is the state of your health? A common salutation sometimes rendered **How do you do?**—**how come?** [U. S.] A phrase from the cottonfields meaning *how does it or did it come about?*—**how are things?** **how is every little thing?** [U. S.] How is the world treating or using you? A form of polite inquiry into one's personal affairs concerning one's welfare—**how much?** [Brit.] What is that you say? What *do you mean?* a general request for an explanation of bombastic speech or a satirical retort to one given to highfalutin or to pedantic phrase

**Hub, the**. Boston, Mass.: derisive use of the figure in the quotation.

Boston State-House is *the hub* of the solar system You couldn't pry that out of a Boston man if you had the tire of all creation straightened out for a crowbar HOLMES *Autocrat* p. 143.

—**up to the hub**. Very deeply or inextricably involved

**huddle on huddle**. In a state of confusion; heaped up.

**hue and cry**. A great stir and clamor about any matter; general alarm or outcry The pursuing of felons "with horn and voice, with horsemen and footmen," from town to town until taken

He came back to the neighborhood after he thought the *hue and cry* was over

CHAS KING *Two Soldiers* 120.

**huff, to take**. To take offense; become sullen or sulky.

Every petty person must be caressed, or otherwise *takes huff*, thinks his merit and wisdom slighted WASHINGTON *Letters* I, 426.

**hug one's chains**. To be satisfied with one's condition; rejoice in servitude.

**hug oneself**. To congratulate oneself; chuckle.

Swift . . . knew that they feared him . . . and he was glad of it, and *hugged himself* in the knowledge. McCARTHY *Four Georges* vol I, p. 37.

**hugger-mugger**. 1. Secret, sly, or underhanded; also secrecy; concealment.

The trial was all mystery; *hugger-mugger*, horror

MOTLEY *John of Barneveld* vol I, p. 226. [H.]

2. A state of disorderliness; also, slovenly, disorderly; confused.

At present, these things are managed in such a *hugger-mugger* way, that we know not what we pay for. LOWELL *Biglow Papers* first series, viii.

3. A person who hides or conceals things, especially money.

**hug the pillow**. A lie-abed or sleepy-head.

**hug the shore**. To keep close to, as a shore; avoid venturing beyond one's depth.

The naval tactics of Bengal—always incline to *hug the shore* as much as possible. HEBER *Narrative of a Journey* I 167.

**hulks, the**. Old ships used as prisons.

**hum, make things**. To act with energy; do things with vim.

**hum and haw.** To speak with hesitation and pauses filled with, "ahem," "and a," "but a," etc.

Don't stand *humming and hawing*, but speak out FIELDING *Tom Jones* IX, xi.

**humming, to keep things.** Same as MAKE THINGS HUM.

**human interest.** [U. S.] That element in a newspaper reporter's account of an event that appeals to the heart rather than to the head.

"What we want," said the foreman, "is *human interest*. . . . Never mind about accuracy—we've a lot of cheap specialists to attend to that Start with a name, then an active verb, and make it breezy "

L. J. DE BEKKER *The Scrio-Comic Profession* p. 54.

**humbug.** (*v.*) To impose upon; deceive, as by false pretenses; trick, hoax.

*Humbug* This last new-coined expression, which is only to be found in the nonsensical vocabulary, sounds absurd and disagreeable whenever it is pronounced

*The Connoisseur* No. 14, 1754.

I . . . feel like a Gordon who has been *humbugged*

GORDON in Arch Forbes's *Chances* Gordon p. 125.

**humbug.** (*n.*) 1. Fraud or imposition practised under specious or fair pretenses; hoax; sham. 2. One who imposes upon people, as by fair pretenses or specious talk; one addicted to deluding or cajoling; an impostor. 3. [Eng.] Peppermint taffy.

**humble-pie.** A pie made from the liver, heart, kidney and entrails of deer. Formerly the *umbles*, originally from *numbles*, the entrails of a deer.

—**humble-pie, to eat.** See under EAT

**hump, to have or get the.** To be disgruntled or down in the mouth; be despondent.

**Hun.** A German: so called from the German emperor's allusion to the Huns on July 30, 1900, when German troops started for China.

**hungry as a bear, hawk, shark, etc.** Exceedingly hungry; ravenous: based on a hypothesis that man is less affected by the natural appetites than other animals.

**hunk, to be or get.** [U. S.] To get even; play safe; to hit the mark or achieve one's purpose.

**Hunker.** [U. S. Pol.] An early name for a conservative Democrat. The phrase was used in New York from 1845, but has become obsolete.

I resolve *hunkerism* into indolence and cowardice, too lazy to think, and too timid to think

W. PHILLIPS *Speeches* 528.

**hunks.** [Brit.] A sordid or niggardly fellow; a covetous man; miser.

No, 'twas to blind the eyes of the old *hunks*

T RANDOLPH *Muse's Looking-Glass* act ii, sc. 4.

**hunky-dory.** [U. S.] Satisfactory; all right; comfortable; jolly. Also **hunkidorum** or **hunky.**

**husband.** One who is house-bound; that is, one owning his own house.

By extension: (1) The master of a house or male head of a household. (2) A man united to a woman by marriage (3) A male animal kept for breeding.

A bull is the *husband* of a cow

TOPSELL *Four-footed Beasts* 47.

The apathy and estrangement between *husband* and wife in the animal world

DRUMMOND *Ascent of Man* 379.

**husbands' boat, the.** [Brit.] The Saturday boat running from London to Margate in summer and used by fathers whose families are staying at the seaside resort.

**hush-money.** A bribe to prevent the disclosure of some criminal or disgraceful act.

He had been forced to pay *hush money* to informers

MACAULAY *Hist. England* VII, ii, 214.

**hush up, to.** To suppress mention of; as, to *hush up* a scandalous story; also, to maintain silence.

Either the Envoys have not written . . . or their communications have been *hushed up*

THOMAS JEFFERSON *Writings* IV, 207.

**husking, corn, or husking-bee.** [U. S.] A gathering of country folk at which a neighbor's corn (maize) crop is husked, usually terminating in a frolic.

He talked of a turkey-hunt, a *husking-bee*, Thanksgiving ball, racing, and a variety of things

SYLVESTER JUDD *Margaret* 48.

**hustle.** [U. S.] Be quick about; hurry up; hasten; put energy into.

**hyphenate.** A hyphenated American.—**Hyphenated American.**

[U. S.] A foreign-born naturalized citizen of the United States, whose attachment is divided between the United States and the land of his birth.

## I

**ice, on.** In reserve.—**a big thing on ice.** [U. S.] A good thing; a profitable enterprise or venture.—**to break the ice.** To overcome the reserve between strangers. Also, to broach a subject, or prepare the way for anything, as an enterprise.

And your cold people are beyond all price

When once you've *broken their* confounded ice

BYRON *Don Juan* XIII, xxxviii.

**identical, the.** The selfsame, whether person, argument or action.

**Idols of the Tribe, etc.** (L., *Idola tribus*). A phrase invented by Francis Bacon for sources of error common to mankind; hence, misleading reasoning; fallacious tendency; idolon. See quotation.

He [Bacon] classifies these sources of error which, in his vivid picturesque language, he calls *Idols* or false appearances, in four categories, the *Idols of the Tribe*, of the *Den*, of the *Market-place*, of the *Theatre*

T B SHAW *English Literature* 101

**if (an or and) you please.** If you will be pleased; if it is your pleasure; either a polite qualification to a request, a proffered kindness, etc.; or, expressive of sarcastic surprise, as, he must have the best, *if you please*.

Let me say no, my Liedge, and *if you please*

SHAKESPEARE *Love's Labor's Lost* act i, sc 1

Pray sir, put your sword up, *if you please* SHAKESPEARE *Twelfth Night* act ii, sc 4

**ignis fatuus.** [L.] 1. A will-o'-the-wisp; foolish fire; a phosphorescence seen in the air over marshy places; corpse-candle; Jack-o'-lantern.

(1) To avoid being led astray by the *ignis fatuus* the most secure method is to carry a lamp

SIR H DAVY *Agric Chem* 1, 26.

2. Hence, any deceptive or alluring attraction; a delusion.

(2) That *ignis fatuus* of the time—uniformity of worship throughout the three kingdoms

DUKE OF ARGYLL *Philos of Belief* pref p 7.

**ilk, of that.** Of that same: a phrase denoting that a person's surname and the name of his estate are identical.

Then they were Knockwinnocks of that *ilk*.

SCOTT *Antiquary* XXIV.

**ill at ease.** See under EASE.

**ill nature.** Evil disposition; bad temper; peevishness.

**ill, to take.** To be offended at or by; take offense.

**ill wind that blows nobody any good, 'tis an.** It is a disastrous event or an overwhelming misfortune that brings no good to someone. Someone profits by every loss; someone is benefited by every misfortune.

Except wind stands as never it stood.

It is an ill-wind turns none to good

TUSSER *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* xiii.

**improve the occasion.** To draw a lesson from an event or avail oneself of the opportunity to do (something).

I had little opportunity for *improving the occasion*, as the Nonconformists have it.

LAWRENCE *Guy Livingstone* viii, 66.

**Indian corn.** [U. S.] The grain chiefly used as food by the aborigines of the three Americas, known in Europe as maize, and in Africa as mealies.

Though we have no beef and mutton . . . our *Indian corn* answers for all

WINTHROP *Letters* I, 379 (1630).

**Indian-giver.** [U. S.] One who gives a present (*Indian gift*) or does a favor with an ulterior motive; also, one who does not fulfil promises.

**Indian file.** Single file; so called as being the order in which the American Indians usually march.

In the formation of my troops I used a single rank, or what is called *Indian file*

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON *Report to the Secretary of State*, Nov. 18, 1811.

**Indian summer.** [U. S.] A period of pleasant, mild weather occurring in the autumn, with hazy atmosphere usually along the horizon, and a clear sky. The term dates from about 1750 (see quotation) and is of American origin. It is now used also in England, and corresponds to the English *St. Luke's* or *St. Martin's summer*. Indian summer occurs in October or, more frequently, in November.

Horace Walpole used the term *Indian Summer* in 1778, not in reference to America, but in relation to weather in the tropics

*Encyclopedia Americana* vol XV, p 32.

**indignation meeting.** [U. S.] A gathering at which citizens express their disapproval of actions, conditions, etc., for the purpose of securing redress.

Part of the reason, and perhaps the main part, for the decline of *indignation meetings* is to be found in the universal reach of the newspaper

*The Evening Post*, New York, Nov. 29, 1909.

**indescribables, indispensables, inexplicables, inexpressibles.** [Brit.] Trousers: a Victorian euphemism.

I've heard that breeches, petticoats and smock  
Give to thy modest mind a grievous shock,  
And that thy brain (so lucky its device),  
Christ'neth them *inexpressibles*, so nice

WOLCOT (P. Pindar) *Rowland for an Oliver* ii, 154.

**influenza.** The grippe.

**in for a penny, in for a pound.** In such a position that the penalty, loss, danger, chance, or risk is the same, regardless of the degree of responsibility involved; seeking the largest profit.

**in for it.** Committed to a course; certain to meet with punishment; in a dangerous or critical situation.

I am *in for it* now, over head and ears, I doubt, and can't help loving him

RICHARDSON *Pamela* II, 99.



**infra dig.** Abbreviation of *infra dignitatem*, beneath one's dignity; unbecoming to one's position.

It would be *infra dig.* in the Provost of this most flourishing and loyal town to  
associate with Redgauntlet SIR WALTER SCOTT *Redgauntlet* xi.

**inkhorn terms.** Dry, pedantic language, smelling of the lamp or schoolhouse. Men that, removed from their *inkhorn terms*,  
Bring forth no action worthy of their bread NASH *Summer's Last Will*.

**innings.** A turn at the bat: used in baseball or cricket. Hence, a turn. Consent to listen to him upon the understanding that they presently are to have their *innings*. THACKERAY *Book of Snobs* XX.

—a good **innings**: Good fortune in money matters or otherwise.—a long **innings**: A long life.

**Innocents, the massacre, murder, or slaughter of the.** [Brit. Pol.] The abandonment of measures that can not be enacted by a parliament drawing to a close, owing to lack of time: an allusion to the massacre ordered by Herod. *Matthew* II, 16.

The *Massacre of the Innocents* was chiefly confined to measures rather to individual and sectional enthusiasm. The *Graphic* London, July 9, 1879

**innocuous desuetude.** [U. S. Polit.] A phrase of President Cleveland's which means "harmless disuse," or, as he intended, abeyance.

After an existence of nearly twenty years of almost *innocuous desuetude* these laws are brought forth GROVER CLEVELAND *Message* March 1, 1886.

**ins and outs.** The turnings or windings; ramifications; hence, the details.

Laura . . . required from me a faithful and true narrative of all my pros and cons, my *ins and outs*, since that separation of ours MALKIN *Gil Blas* VII, vi

**inside track.** [U. S.] The inner position on a race course, which gives a great advantage at the turn; hence, a point of vantage; a short cut to success.

I gave him the *inside track*, as the sporting men say, with reference to the good will of either of these O W HOLMES *Guardian Angel* xviii

**inspired.** [Journalese.] A tone or editorial policy from a source not identified with that of the proprietors of a newspaper or magazine. Originally the phrase suggested confidential relations with a Government, but later with commercial, financial, industrial, or political propagandists

**institution.** A long established custom; a familiar practise or object. Slavery in the United States was spoken of as a "peculiar institution."

When it is said that the *institution* exists, and that it is very difficult to get rid of it in any satisfactory way, I can appreciate and understand the saying A LINCOLN *Speech at Peoria* December, 1860.

**intellectual evaluator.** [U. S.] A hack who writes about books, music or art; a critic: a newspaperism.

The *intellectual evaluator* is to the first hand revealer of actuality as the anatomist to the observer of physiological processes. The *Dial* New York, April, 1921.

**intention, healing by first.** The union of divided parts of a wound without granulation.

This Galen termed re-union by *the first intention*

J. THOMPSON *Lectures on Inflamm.* 125.

**intrigue.** I. v. 1. To puzzle, fascinate, perplex; to fill with deceit or duplicity.

He found himself so *intrigued* that it was like a wolf by the ears, he could neither hold it nor let it go; and, for certain, it bit him at last

ROGER NORTH *Lord Gulsford* II, 2.

2. To engage in a clandestine or illicit love affair. **II. n. 1.** An underhand scheme or plot. 2. An illicit or clandestine love affair.
- in with.** On a friendly footing with.
- I O U.** A paper having on it these letters (meaning *I owe you*), followed by a named sum and duly signed: a form of acknowledgment of debt among friends.
- Of course with *I O Us* on his domains. MARRYAT *Olla Podrida* 300.
- ipse dixit.** [L.] Literally, he himself has said; hence, a dogmatic assertion; dictum.
- To emancipate us from the capricious *ipse dixit* of authority. J. H. NEWMAN *Gram. Assent* II, 255.
- Irish apple, apricot, or lemon.** [Brit.] A potato.
- Irish bull.** A ludicrous blunder that involves contradiction or inconsistency of statement; as,
- "Pat, do you understand French?  
Yis, if it's shpoke in Irish"
- Irish stew.** A stew of mutton, potatoes and onions.
- Irish up, to get one's.** To become angry.
- iron** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases such as the following:—**an inch** (or more) **of cold iron.** A stab from a dagger, thrust from a rapier or other weapon
- Undertake to make the Turk eat *cold iron* SIR T. HERBERT *Travels* 131.
- iron age.** 1. The last and most degraded of the periods of the existence of the human race, as characterized by Hesiod, hence, a degenerate, unjust, or impious period, as, the *iron age* of Greek civilization: opposed to *golden age*. 2. The last and in general the highest of the three roughly classified prehistoric stages of progress (stone, bronze, and iron)—**ironbark.** An Australian tree of the genus *Eucalyptus*, having a solid bark—**Iron Chancellor.** A sobriquet of Prince Otto von Bismarck, in allusion to his stern resolution—**Iron Cross, Order of the I. Cross.** A Prussian order instituted in 1813 by Frederick William III, to be conferred for distinguished services in war, revived in 1870 by William I—**Iron Duke.** A sobriquet of the Duke of Wellington, conqueror of Napoleon—**iron fiddle.** A series of iron rods, mounted on a resonant base, and so graduated in length and size as to sound a musical scale when vibrated—**iron gum-tree.** An Australian tree (*Eucalyptus raverchana*) of great size, valued for timber—**iron hat.** [U. S.] Decomposed iron-bearing rock.—**iron-horse.** 1. A locomotive
- I saw the *iron horses* of the steam  
Toss to the morning air their plumes of smoke.  
LONGFELLOW *Monte Cassino*.
2. [Eng.] A bicycle or tricycle
- Mr. S. started on his third day's journey of the 650 miles on his *iron horse*  
*Echo* October 29, 1875.
- Iron Maiden of Nuremberg.** A medieval hollow iron figure of a woman, fitted with spikes pointing inward, designed to torture a victim pressed in its embrace. It was formerly exhibited in Nuremberg Castle. Called also **The Maiden.**—**iron period.** The iron age—**iron rations.** [Mil.] Emergency rations, tinned foods, bully-beef, hardtack, jam, and tea
- The regiment . . . gnawing ravenously from time to time upon its *iron rations*, as the compact reserve of food which each soldier carries upon his back is called
- P. C. MACFARLANE in *Saturday Evening Post* Jan. 18, 1919.
- Ironsides.** [Eng.] 1. A Royalist nickname for Oliver Cromwell 2. The soldiers led by Cromwell at the battle of Marston Moor (1644), where they displayed great bravery, hence, Cromwell's whole army
- Cromwell's *Ironsides* were the embodiment of this insight of his; men fearing God; and without any other fear CARLYLE *Heroes* p. 198.
- iron-tree.** A hard- or tough-wooded tree as either of the West Indies, Persia, or Australia—**iron-weed.** A North-American asteraceous weed, growing from 3 to 6 feet high, common in the eastern United States.—**ironwood.** One of various trees

having unusually strong, heavy, and hard wood, especially the buckthorn or hornbeam.  
—**Old Ironsides.** The United States frigate "Constitution," launched at Boston, Sept. 20, 1797 so called from the slight damage done to her hull during her battle with the British ship "Guerrière."—**to be in or put in irons.** To be fettered or shackled; be put into fetters

Mark Smeton, who had confessed his guilt, was *ironed* FROUDE *Hist. Eng.* II, 473.  
—**to have the iron entered into his soul.** To be desperately grieved or afflicted; suffer extreme anguish of mind

Lat. "ferrum pertransit animam ejus," *Psalm* civ, a mistranslation in the Vulgate of the Heb. (lit. 'his person entered into the iron') followed by the earlier English versions SIR JAMES A. H. MURRAY *New Eng. Dict.*

She was sinking into a slavery worse than that of the body. The iron was beginning to enter into the soul MACAULAY *Essays Madame D'Arblay*

—**to have too many irons in the fire.** To be engaged in too many enterprises.

They that have many *irons in the fire*, some must burne

CAPT JOHN SMITH *Virginia* IV, 159.

—**to strike while the iron is hot.** To engage in an enterprise with promptness when circumstances are favorable, to make the best of an opportunity.

**irony of fate or of circumstances.** A condition of affairs or events exactly the reverse of what was to be expected; a contradictory outcome of events as if in mockery of what might have been looked for.

The contrast between man with his hopes, fears, wishes, and undertakings, and a dark inflexible fate, affords abundant room for the exhibition of tragic irony.

THIRLWALL *Philological Museum* ii, 483.

—**Socratic irony.** The pretense of ignorance with which Socrates conducted his discussions

**ish ka bibble.** A nonsense word formed by a comedian as a bit of hokum: but see quotation, whence, "I should be embarrassed"; "I should worry"; used ironically.

To the Jews *ish* is obviously the first personal pronoun and *kaa* probably corruption of *Kann*. As for *bibble* I suspect that it is the offspring of *bedbibbert* (=embarrassed, intimidated). MENCKEN *The American Language* 151 Note.

**Islands of the Blest.** In Greek mythology, legendary islands in the western ocean to which favorites of the gods were translated.

**issue, at.** In dispute; hence, in law, disagreeing on a specific essential point in controversy.

**issue with, to join.** To take opposite sides of a case or views of a proposition; in law, to submit an issue for decision, or to accept the issue tendered by the other side.

**itching palm.** A hankering after gain.

Let me tell you, Cassius, you yourself  
Are much condemned to have an *itching palm*;

To sell and mart your offices for gold

To underserve

SHAKESPEARE *Julius Cæsar* act iv, sc. 3.

**ivories.** 1. The teeth. 2. Billiard balls. 3. Dice. 4. The keys of a piano keyboard.—**to show one's ivories.** To show one's teeth.

Don Sancho, who complains of the toothache, to make you believe that the *two rows of ivory* he carries in his head, grew there MRS COWLEY *Bold Stroke for Hush* II, ii.

**Ixiotic fate or wheel.** In Greek mythology, Ixion, king of the Lapithæ, made love to Hera, and Zeus sent him a phantom resembling her through whom he became father of the Centaurs. As a punishment Hermes chained him to a wheel that rolled perpetually in the air.

\ Condemned to an eternal *Ixiotic fate*! CUDWORTH *Intell. System* I, iii, 24.

## J

**jabber.** Chatter or unintelligible speech, as when one hears a foreign and unknown language spoken: in use both as noun and verb.

**jack.** 1. [U. S.] Money. 2. [J-] A man; hence, a sailor.

(1) Chesterton . . . they tell me he'll clean up a mess of *jack* lecturin' for 3 months. Pretty soft. *The New York Herald* Jan. 27, 1921.

**Jack-a-dandy.** A coxcomb; fop; dandiprat; a pert fellow.

And when my monies is all gone, what shall I be then? An ass, a fool, a *Jack-a-dandy!* R. CUMBERLAND *The Jew* I.

**jackanapes.** A whipper-snapper; an absurd fop; an impudent, showy but diminutive person.

**Jack and Jill.** Any man and his sweetheart or wife: used proverbially in Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," act iii.

And *Jack* shall pipe, and *Jill* shall dance,  
And all the town be merry.

GEORGE WITHER *Merry Christmas* st. 5.

**Jackaroo.** [Australian.] One newly arrived from England; a tenderfoot. The young *Jackaroo* woke early next morning, and went to look about him

A. C. GRANT *Bush Life* I. 53.

**jackass.** A stupid person; a dolt, a blunderhead.

I began to think I had borne myself something like a *jackass* in the matter.

SCOTT *Peveril of the Peak* vii.

**Jack-at-a-pinch.** [Brit.] One who easily fits into any place or work; also, a ready substitute or a substituting clergyman.

Miss Coon . . . knows that the Major took her (to wife) *Jack-at-a-pinch*—seein' he couldent get such as he wanted, he took such as he could get.

WHITCHER *Widow Bedott Papers* ii.

**Jack Frost.** The personification of wintry weather.

**jack-in-a-box.** A toy consisting of a box containing a grotesque figure which springs up when the lid is unfastened. Hence, a restless person; one who is continually on the jump.

**Jack in office.** An arrogant or insolent official.

**Jack-in-the-green.** [Brit.] A lad or a man enclosed in a pyramidal framework of boughs on May day in which he dances and sports around during the May day festivities.

The editor saw a *jack-in-the-green* with men dressed as milkmaids dancing around it May 1st of the present year (1895) H. B. WHEATLEY *Pepy's Diary* VI, 296, note.

**Jack-in-the-pulpit.** 1. An upstart; a pretender. 2. A wild turnip.

**Jack Ketch.** A public executioner or hangman: from *Jack Ketch*, an executioner in the time of James II.

If they seize the vessel, it is piracy—a criminal act which ends with *Jack Ketch*.

CLARK RUSSELL *Marooned* 75.

**jack-leg lawyer.** [U.S.] A pettifogging lawyer; a shyster; a police-court counselor: in contempt. Sometimes applied to disreputable men in other professions.

They had with them a long-legged chap, a sorter *jack-leg lawyer*.

PAXTON *A Stray Yankee in Texas* 137.

**Jack of all trades.** One who is able to turn his hand to almost anything. It would be unfair to Lord Brougham to say that he was "*Jack of all trades*, and master of none." WALPOLE *Hist. England* I. 311.

**Jack-o'-lantern.** [U. S.] A lantern formed by hollowing out a pumpkin or squash, and making incisions to represent eyes, nose, and mouth; hence, any alluring light; a will-o'-the-wisp.

I have followed Cupid's *Jack-o'-lantern*, and find myself in a quagmire at last.

SHERIDAN *The Rivals* act iii, sc. 4.

**Jack-on-both-sides.** One who hunts with the hounds and runs with the hare; a straddler.

Did I a factious covenant subscribe,

Or turn a *Jack-on-both-sides* for a tribe? *Rump Songs* I, 140 (1662).

**Jack-out-of-office.** A jobless politician; discharged official.

But long I will not be *Jack-out-of-office*

SHAKESPEARE *I Henry VI* act i, sc. 1.

**Jack Robinson, before you can say.** In a moment of time; at once: said to have been a man's name, but an old play has "saye *Jacke robs* [robes?] *on*." Sometimes abbreviated to *J. R.*

**Jack Sprat, Jack-Straw.** A dwarf; a nobody.

You are a saucy *Jack-Straw* to question. WYCHERLEY *Love in a Wood* act i, sc. 2.

**Jack-tar.** [Humorous.] A plain sailor.

A jolly warm-hearted *Jack Tar*.

LAMB *Essays Old Actors* i.

**jacket.** The skin of a potato.

Some potatoes in their *jackets*.

STEVENSON *Inland Voyage* 58.

**jacket, to line one's.** To fill one's stomach; to eat and drink.

**jacket, to trim, dust or dress down one's.** To thrash, reprove or call to account.

**jacketing.** A thrashing; a reprimand.

**jackpot.** A corruption fund: from the name of a pool in the game of poker, which can not be bet on until one player has "jacks or better."

Testimony about "*Jackpots*" or general corruption funds to be used in obtaining votes of legislators was sought.

*The Evening Post*, New York, July 14, 1911.

**jack up.** 1. [Brit.] To give up or throw up. 2. To raise with a jack; hence, figuratively, to be raised far enough to be thrown out.

**jade.** An unsafe or tricky horse, or one that has been overridden or foundered; also, a hussy; minx: a contemptuous epithet applied to women.

A faded old woman, a heathenish *jade*

LONGFELLOW *The Musician's Tale*.

**jac.** [U. S.] Originally, a small cartload of wood, a load of hay, etc.; hence, a load of drink.

A "saccharine" *jac* appears to be the latest thing in the way of Yankee intoxication.

*Pall Mall Gazette* Sept. 15, 1891.

**jailbird.** One who has been confined in prison; a criminal.

**jakes.** A house of office, a privy.

**jamboree.** [U. S.] A spree, carousal, frolic.

**jam-pot.** [Australia.] A high collar.

**Jane-of-apes.** A forward, pert girl; the female of the species *jack-anapes* (q. v.).

Here's a *Jane-of-apes* shall serve.

MASSINGER *Bondman* act iii, sc. 3.

**jar, on a or the.** A swinging, as of a door on its hinges, slightly opened. The door was *on the jar*, and, gently opening it, I entered and stood behind her

unperceived.

H. BROOKE *Fool of Quality* I, 311.

**jarvey.** [Brit.] A cabdriver or the driver of a hackney-coach. Spelt also *jarvie*.

**jawbreaker.** A word difficult to pronounce.

**jay.** 1. [Brit.] A simpleton; dunce; baffle-head. 2. [U. S.] A countryman; boob; greenhorn; rustic; bumpkin; yap; rube.

**jayhawker.** [U. S.] One of the irregular fighting men or guerillas during the free soil troubles in Kansas prior to and during the Civil War.

He and his father are catching the horses of the dead and dying *Jay-hawkers*

GEORGE W. CABLE in *The Century* XXXIII.

**jay-town.** [U. S.] A country-town inhabited by jays, rubes, hicks, yaps. A *jay-town*—term alleged to have been used by Mrs Kendal in describing San Francisco. A "jay" or a "yapp" is the American equivalent of an English yokel or country bumpkin. *The Referee* London Nov 25, 1894.

**jazz.** [U. S.] Ragtime music in discordant tones, or the notes for it.

*Jazz* music was invented by demons for the torture of imbeciles

HENRY VAN DYK *Address to National Education Assn* Feb 26, 1921.

**Jeames.** [Brit.] A flunkey, footman, or liveried servant.

**Jedburgh, Jeddart, or Jedwood justice.** To hang a suspected criminal and hold the trial afterward: from Jedburgh, a border town of Scotland, where many raiders were subjected to summary execution.

*Jedwood justice*—hang in haste and try at leisure. SCOTT *Fair Maid of Perth* xxxii.

**Jehu.** The son of Nimshi (see quotation). Hence, a driver, especially one who drives recklessly.

And the watchman told, saying . . . and the driving is like the driving of *Jehu* the son of Nimshi, for he driveth furiously. II Kings ix, 20.

**jemmy or jimmy.** A burglar's implement of varying length, often in sections for ease of concealment much used by burglars; a crowbar.

Fame, won by highway pistol or burglar's *jemmy*. DOUGLAS JERROLD *St Giles* VII.

**Jeremy Diddler.** [Brit.] An impecunious parasite and swindler who living with, and at the expense of others borrows money from them which he never repays: from the name of the chief character in Kenny's farce "Raising the Wind."

Poor *Jeremy Diddler* calls about eleven o'clock for another half sovereign.

THACKERAY *Virginians* XXXI.

**Jericho** occurs in the following idiomatic phrases:—**from Jericho to June.**

A prodigious distance.

His kick was tremendous . . . he would send a man from *Jericho to June*

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends*.

—**gone to Jericho.** Gone no one knows where —**go to Jericho!** See under *go*.—**stay in Jericho.** Wait until you have grown older and wiser

Who would to curbe such insolence, I know,

Bid such young boyes to *stay in Jericho*

Until their beards were growne, their wits more staid

HEYWOOD *Hierarchy* bk. iv, p. 208.

—**to wish one in Jericho.** To wish one far away.

**jerry-builder.** One who builds houses out of inferior material and without proper regard to construction; a speculating builder.

That *jerry-builder* and *jerry-built* originated in some way from the name Jerry is probable . . . that they commemorate the name of a building firm on the Mersey, has, on investigation, not been confirmed

SIR JAMES A. H. MURRAY *New English Dictionary*.

**Jerrymander.** [Brit.] Gerrymander. See quotation.

The Marquis of Salisbury, in a recent speech, attributed the origin of what he called *Jerry-mandering* to an individual called "Jerry Manders." This is a fair example of the Marquis's accuracy, neither one nor the other of these names being correct

*The Echo* London Dec. 7, 1883.

**jerry-shop.** A low beer-house or groggery: so called from *Tom and Jerry*, a hot drink of rum and water sweetened, spiced, and beaten up with egg. A contraction of the name of the drink.

A worse than *jerry-shop* over the way ragged like Bedlam or Erebus.

CARLYLE in *FROUDE'S Life*.

**jersey, blue.** A seaman.

**Jersey lightning.** [U. S.] Apple brandy made in New Jersey; hence, any very strong intoxicating liquor.

Apple-john in New England it has the terrible name of *Jersey Lightning* further south.  
DE VERE *Americanisms*.

**jess.** A short strap of silk fastened around the leg: usually in the plural *jesses*. Spelt also *gess*. Derived from the short leather straps originally fastened around the legs of hawks in falconry

Methinks you are one who would find even *jesses* of silk or gold cord difficult to wear.

G. P. R. JAMES *Woodman* xvii.

**Jesse or Jessy, to give one.** [U. S.] To give one a good scolding or a sound thrashing; dust one's jacket.

He turned on the woman and gave her *Jesse*. CORNELIUS MATHEWS *Writings* i, 243.

**jet.** To walk about in a pompous, conceited manner; parade pompously; swagger or strut.

O peace! Contemplation makes a rare turkey-cock of him; how he *jets* under his  
advanc'd plumes! SHAKESPEARE *Twelfth Night* act ii, sc 5.

**Jew's eye.** Anything exceedingly valuable, or for which a medieval Jew would have borne the loss of an eye.

There will come a Christian by  
Will be worth a *Jewess' eye*

SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice*, act ii, sc 5.

**Jezebel.** A wicked wanton woman impudently brazen and given to painting her face: from *Jezebel*, the wife of Ahab, who killed the Prophets of God (*I Kings* xviii, 4), planned Elijah's death (*I Kings*, xix, 1-2), procured the death of Naboth (*I Kings* xxi, 9), and was herself thrown out of a window and trodden under foot by Jehu's horses (*II Kings* ix, 30).

Mrs Jenkins was all bespattered with dirt, as well as insulted with the opprobrious name of painted *Jezebel*.

SMOLLETT *Humphry Clinker* L 52.

**jib, the cut of one's.** See under *CUT*.

**jibber the kibber.** [Eng.] The fastening of a lantern to a horse's neck and checking one of its legs so as to make the light swing as a ship's light: a practise of wreckers to allure ships to shore.

**jibe.** To agree with; be in harmony with: a variant of *gibe*.

The piece you happened to be playing didn't seem to *jibe* with the general  
gait of the picture that was passing at the time MARK TWAIN *Screamers* 60.

**jiff, jiffy.** A short interval of time; a moment; an instant.

In *six jiffies* I found myself and all my retinue . . . at the rock of Gibraltar  
*Munchhausen's Travels* XXIII.

**jigamaree.** Something for which there is no other name, or the proper name is unknown or forgotten at the moment of speaking: thingumagig; thingumbob; what-dye-call-it; jiggumbob; jiggalarum; any fanciful contrivance.

**jigger, not worth a.** [Brit.] Not worth anything; valueless.

**jiggered, I'll be.** An exclamation of astonishment or amazement provoked as by some startling event or thing.

"Well," said Mr Hobbs, "I'll be *jiggered*." BURNET *Little Lord Fauntleroy* II.  
**jilt.** 1. A capricious young woman who, having encouraged a man's attentions, discards him on tiring of them.

Dilatory Fortune plays the *Jilt* With the brave noble honest gallant Man,  
To throw herself away on Fools and Knaves OTWAY *The Orphan* act i, sc. 1.

2. A woman of equivocal reputation; a hack.

**jimcrack.** A gimmerack.

**Jim-crow car.** [U. S.] A street or railway-car divided into two parts, one part for the whites, the other part for the negroes. They are required by law in most Southern States. *Jim Crow* was a generic name for colored people introduced in the name and the refrain of a song by T. D. Rice in 1835.

**Jim-dandy.** [U. S.] Fine as silk, superlatively good. See JACK-A-DANDY.

**jimjams.** [Brit.] 1. Peculiarities; idiosyncrasies. 2. Delirium tremens; the horrors.

I'll die on the flags with the *jim-jams* before I'll wet my lips with it again  
J RUNCIMAN *Skippers and Shellbacks* 42

3. *sing.* A gimmerack.

A thousand *jimjams* and toys have they in theyr chambers

NASH *Pierce Penilesse* 1592

**jinglebrains.** A flighty person; a wild, harum-scarum fellow.

**Jingo.** In British politics one who favored a spirited foreign policy in 1877-78. The word, first coined as a bit of conjurors' *hoecus-pocus*, was in use in 1650. Motteux, in his translation of Rabelais works, rendered the French phrase "*Pur Dieu*" with "*By Jingo*" in 1694, so that H. Bottomley's claim of the term for his uncle George Jacob Holyoake (see "John Bull," Nov. 10, 1917) is without foundation.

**jitney.** [U. S.] A disk of stamped metal used as a counter or small coin of black money, an abbey-piece. Used in Louisiana, and thence applied to a vehicle on which the fare is five cents, as a **jitney bus**. To Troop-Sergeant George Washington Lee we owe the reminder of a little catch popular with the Louisiana French-speaking negro

Mettons *jetnée* dans li trou  
Et parcourons sur la rue—  
Mettons *jetnée*—si non vous  
Vous promenez à pied nu!

This may be very freely translated

Put a *jitney* in the slot  
And over the street you ride;  
Put a *jitney*—for if not  
You'll foot it on your hide

You pay your *jitney* and you take your choice

**job** is used with varying significance in the following phrases:—**a bad job.**

A failure; something on which one's efforts have been spent in vain.

We are, unfortunately, very much in debt

That's a *bad job*, said my Lord LANG *Wand India* 404

—**by the job.** At a price agreed upon for a piece of work to be done —**odd job.** An occasional or casual piece of work —**on the job.** Attending strictly to the matter in hand whether work or play —**to do one's job.** 1. To attend to one's work. 2. To murder a term of the underworld —**to make the best of a bad job.** To resign oneself to the consolation that things might be worse —**to pay by the job.** To remunerate for service rendered as done instead of by the week or month.

The teacher said he was *paid by the job* LIVINGSTONE *Zambesi* xviii.  
—**to put up a job on.** [U. S.] To plan and carry out a hoax or swindle



**Job.** The patriarch whose life-story forms the Biblical book that bears his name: a type of patience in adversity. The name occurs in sundry phrases, as *Job's comforter*. See under COMFORTER — *Job's news*. Disagreeable intelligence, unfavorable reports, bad news

This, we think, is nothing but *Job's news* to the human reader.

CARLYLE *Sartor Resartus* III, v.

—**Job's post.** One who brings *Job's news* or evil tidings

This *Job's post* from Dumouriez, thickly preceded and escorted by so many other *Job's posts*, reached the National Convention CARLYLE *French Revolution* III, III, IV.

**jobation, jawbation.** A long tedious reproof, dreary homily, prolonged scolding, or a scholastic rebuke.

Getting a most fearful *jobation* from the Dean for daring to appear in his presence without his cap and gown H. KINGSLEY *Austin Elliot* XIV.

**jobbernowl.** A dull-witted stupid person: a blockhead; a numskull.

Thou simple animal, thou *jobbernowl*

GAYTON *Festivous Notes* iv, 17, p. 260.

**jobbery.** [Polit.] Graft, political corruption, pressure or unfair advantage exerted to the detriment of public interests.

Mr Merdle had decided to cast the weight of his great probity and great riches into the Barnacle scale *Jobbery* was suspected by the malicious

DICKENS *Little Dorrit* II, 351.

**jockey.** To maneuver for advantage, as in a race; hence, to get the better of; also, to cheat or deceive in a bargain.

Have we penniless directors issuing *El Dorado* prospectuses, and *jockeying* their shares through the market?

THACKERAY *Paris Sketch-book* 173.

**Joe Miller.** A stale story or worn out joke: from *Joseph Miller*, an actor and humorist (1684-1738), whose name was printed on a jest-book published in 1739 but who never was known to write a joke.

Take hackneyed *jokes* from *Miller*, got by rote,

With just enough of learning to misquote

BYRON *Eng Bards and Scotch Reviewers* I. 65.

**jog.** To push or shake slightly, nudge; hence, figuratively, to excite gently; set going, as by a push; stimulate, as, to *jog* the memory.

**jog on.** To ride or walk with a jolting pace; move or go on; be off.

**John-a-Dreams.** A sleepy-headed doltish fellow; a dreamer; an idealist, as opposed to a man of action.

Yet I, a dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,

Like *John-a-Dreams*, unpregnant of my cause,

And can say nothing

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act II, sc. 2.

**John-among-the-maids.** [Brit.] A lady's man; a beau.

**John-a-Nokes.** [Brit.] A simpleton or silly fellow. ¶

**John Audley or Orderly.** [Brit. Theat. Slang.] The cue to cut short a performance so as to empty the house because there are enough persons waiting to form another audience.

One said '*John Audley*' that means leave off.

EMERSON *Signor Lippo* v.

**John Barleycorn.** Whisky, in the United States and Scotland, but beer in the South of England.

*John Barleycorn* was a hero bold

Of noble enterprise

BURNS *John Barleycorn*.

**John Bull.** The personification of an Englishman, a bluff, portly, good-natured but obstinate fellow of the gentleman-farmer type: from a

satire by Dr. J. Arbuthnot written in 1712 and in popular use from that date.

Law is a Bottomless Pit Exemplified in the case of Lord Strutt, *John Bull*, Nicholas Frog, and Lewis Baboon, who spent all they had in a law-suit

ARBUTHNOT *Law is a Bottomless Pit*

**John Chinaman.** The English nickname for the Chinese as a people.

**John Company.** A nickname for the British East India Company, once practically the ruling power in India.

In old times *John Company* employed 4,000 men in its warehouse

*Old and New London* ii, 185

A humorous appellation taken over from the name *Jan Kompanie* by which the Dutch East Indies Company, and now the Dutch Government, are known to nations in the East

SIR JAMES MURRAY *New English Dictionary*.

**John Doe and Richard Roe.** [Legal Cant.] The names given in the now obsolete mixed action of ejectment under British Common Law to the fictitious lessee of the plaintiff These dummy names, also used in the United States where Common Law governed, now figure in blanket investigations by grand juries, often called **John Doe proceedings**, into public affairs, especially in graft cases.

**John Dory.** A small yellowish food-fish; written also **John-dory**. Because it has dark spots on each side it is fabled to be the fish from which St. Peter took the tribute-money, the spots being believed to be the imprints of his thumb and finger. *Matthew* xvii, 27.

**John a or o' Nokes and John a or o' Styles.** [Brit. Law.] Fictitious names employed in court proceedings. Compare **JOHN DOE AND RICHARD ROE**.

Doth the lawyer lye then, when vnder the names of *John a Stile* and *John a Noakes* hee puts his case? *SIDNEY Apol Poetrie Works* 520

**Johnnie or Johnny.** [Brit.] 1. A young man about town, especially one given to hanging about stage-doors. 2. A sweetheart; also, a policeman.

**Johnny-cake or journey-cake.** 1. [U. S.] A bread or cake made of corn-meal.

The fine meal Indian *Johnny-cake*, mixed with cream, eggs, and sugar, and forming, when rightly made, perhaps the most delectable esculent of the bread kind that ever gratified an epicure's palate. *D P. THOMPSON Locke Amsden* 22

You can never teach the world how to make a *johnny-cake* because you never learned. You were born so *JOHN WILLIAMSON PALMER After His Kind* p. 198.

2. [Australian] A cake of wheat-meal fried in a pan or baked on ashes.

**Johnny Cake.** [Brit.] A New Englander, a Yankee.

**Johnny Crapaud.** An offensive nickname for a Frenchman, formerly common among seamen.

**Johnny Raw.** [Brit.] A novice; an apprentice; a recruit.

You took me for a *Johnny Raw*? With no more mother-wit or courage than a porridge stick. *STEVENSON Kidnapped* 39.

Men-apprentices . . . from remote towns were called *Johnny Raws* by the fraternity *THOMPSON Autobiography* 73.

**Johnny Reb.** [U. S.] A Confederate soldier.

By the Widow Perkins (said another), if *Johnny Reb* hasn't taken their rudders away, and sent them adrift *ADMIRAL PORTER Incidents of the Civil War* 170.

**Join hands with.** To become associated with; become a partner of.

A banker . . . who *joins hands with* the lawyer in his ruin of thousands

MRS LYNN LINTON *P Carew* XX.

**Join or go over to the majority.** To pass over to the dead; die.

**joint.** [U. S.] A place of evil or illegal resort, as an opium *joint*: sometimes used humorously for a club or other respectable meeting-place.

**joint, out of.** Dislocated; out of proper place; hence, figuratively, in confusion.

The time is *out of joint* O cursed spite,  
That ever I was born to set it right!

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act i, sc. 5.

**joker.** 1. In card-playing, an extra card always included in a pack of cards of American make, and when used in play always of the highest value, as in euchre. 2. [Brit.] A general term of banter. 3. [U. S. Pol.] A concealed grant of privilege, money, or franchise in a harmless-looking bill presented to a law-making body, or a hidden clause which would make the law inoperative, or change its effect.

**jolly.** I. *a.* [Brit.] 1. Excellent; fine; exceedingly good. 2. Exhilarated, as by alcohol; spring; inebriated. II. *n.* [Brit. & U. S.] Banter; chaff, also, commendation, especially when used jocularly. III. *v.* To encourage or rally, cheer up, as by passing a joke.

*Jollying* is a common term among workmen in London, and is used to express nearly every description of verbal ridicule and abuse.

Notes and Queries Series V, xi, 406.

**Jolly Roger.** A pirate's flag consisting of a white skull and cross-bones on a black field.

Set all sail! Clear the deck! Stand to quarters! Up with the *Jolly Roger*!

SCOTT *The Pirate* xxxi

**Jonah.** Any person regarded as bringing ill luck: from the Biblical story of the prophet Jonah.

I am the *Jonah*, the crew should cast me into the deep

TENNYSON *The Wreck* st. 7

—like *Jonah's gourd*. Resembling anything of sudden growth and equally sudden destruction, meteoric, mushroom-like.

Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the *gourd* . . . which came up in a night, and perished in a night.

*Jonah* iv, 10

**Jonathan.** An American; especially, a Yankee from Down East. See BROTHER JONATHAN.

The English, I must confess, seemed to be more liberal than the *Jonathans*, whose calculating, money-making disposition always shews itself.

N. DANA *A Mariner's Sketches* 240

**Jonathan's arrows.** Something used to give warning.

His words, like *Jonathan's arrows*, should be shot, not to hurt, but only to give warning.

LE FANU *The House in the Churchyard* xcix

**Jones's, to keep up with the.** To maintain outward show of equality with some one better off than oneself.

**jorum.** A drinking bowl, jug or large pitcher.

After dinner, Mr. Bob Sawyer . . . proceeded to brew a reeking *jorum* of rum-punch.

DICKENS *Pickwick* xxxviii

**Joseph.** 1. A man impervious to the charms of the opposite sex. See JOSEPH'S COAT. 2. An overcoat or a garment serving as such for women.

Mrs. Buby . . . endued with what was then called a *joseph*, an ample garment . . . of divers colors.

SCOTT *The Pirate* xi.

**Joseph's coat.** A coat of honor, the garb of a favorite.

Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age and he made him a *coat of many colors*.

*Genesis* xxxvii, 3

—to wear *Joseph's coat*. To escape from temptation, as when Joseph fled from Potiphar's wife. See *Genesis* xxxix, 12.

**Joseph, not for.** [Brit. Slang.] By no means: a sarcastic dissent or contemptuous refusal.

Not for Joe Not for Joe . . . *Not for Joseph* if he knows it

*Broadside Ballad* (1867).

**josh.** [Brit.] A dolt or dull-witted person; a sleepy-head.

**josh.** [U. S.] To cajole; banter; tease; jolly; joke.

Oh go away, I fear you are *joshing me*

*Century Magazine* 63 (1891).

**joskin.** [Brit.] A bumpkin; dolt; yokel.

I hate the *Joskins*, a name for Hertfordshire bumpkins

CHARLES LAMB *Letter to Mr Manning* (1819).

**jounce.** [U. S.] To shake or jolt by rough riding or otherwise; to deal severely with.

Here she sat herself down with a *jounce*

MRS WHITNEY *Sights and Insights*.

**joy-ride.** [U. S.] An automobile outing undertaken without the owner's consent, as by a chauffeur or other person, frequently at break-neck speed, and sometimes ending in disaster. The use of the phrase gradually included after-hour outings by officials in government-owned cars.

About midnight he took the engine out on the main track and had a wild *joy-ride*.  
*The Evening Post* New York, Nov. 25, 1909.

**Judas hair.** Red hair of pronounced type.

His very *hair* is of the dissembling color, something browner than *Judas's*

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act iii, sc 4.

**Judas-hole.** A small wicket or spy-hole in a door. Called also *Judas-slit*.

He knew the world as he had seen it through *Judas-holes*, chiefly in its foulness and impurity

CHARLES READE *Never Too Late to Mend*.

**Judas kiss.** A kiss simulating friendship and characteristic of hypocrisy.

So *Judas* kissed his Master

And cried—All hail! when—as he meant—all harm.

SHAKESPEARE III *Henry VI*, act v, sc 7.

**jug or stone jug.** A prison or jail.

We intend to take a few more pages from the Old Bailey Calendar to bless the public with, one more draught from the *stone-jug*

THACKERAY *Catherine I*.

**jugful, not by a.** Not by a good deal, by no means.

Downingville is as sweet as a rose. But 'tain't so in New York, not by a *jugful*.  
DOWNING *Mayday in New York*.

**Jumbo.** [Brit.] Anything large and striking; from a famous elephant of that name, later purchased by Phineas T. Barnum and brought to the United States.

**jumbuck.** [Australian.] A sheep: claimed as an aboriginal pigeon-English word by Edwin E. Morris in "Austral-English," notwithstanding its resemblance to *gemsbok* (a chamois).

You pilmally *jumbuck* plenty sulky me, plenty boom, borack gammon. (If you kill my sheep, I shall be very angry, and will shoot you, no mistake)

C GRIFFITH *Port Philip Dist*, New South Wales.

**jump a claim.** See under CLAIM.

**jump at.** To grasp eagerly or accept with alacrity; as, she *jumped at* the bargain.

**jump the besom.** See BROOMSTICK, MARRY OVER THE.

**junper.** 1. A short jacket frequently worn with overalls by workmen.

2. A sleeveless one-piece dress. 3. A counter-jumper.

**jumping off place or point.** 1. [Brit.] The end of a journey; a place from which one jumps off to a region beyond. 2. [U. S.] "The last

place on earth": a phrase generally used in derision or contempt, but sometimes in accord with British usage.

The *jumping off place* of Arctic navigators—our last point of communication with the outside world

KANE *Grinnell Exped.* X, 70

Natchez under the hill is, in fact, the *jumping off place*

Col. Crockett in *Texas* 98 (1836)

**junket.** 1. [U. S. Pol.] A picnic, feast, excursion, especially tours of inspection at public expense by legislators or other officials. 2. A delicacy made of curds, flavored and served with cream; also, a drink made of curdled cream, spice and spirits.

She made him stand-by and help make a *junket*, which Devonshire people believe cannot be made outside the shadow of Dartmoor

W. BESANT *Armored of Lyonesse* 1 81

**Jupiter pluvius!** Jupiter, the rain-giver frequently used as an exclamation connoting distress and implying "It never rains but it pours," that is, misfortunes never come singly.

**jury-fixer.** [U. S.] One who bribes jurymen.

There was an idea abroad that there might be some scope in the proceedings before the Grand Jury for a *jury-fixer*

*The Washington Post* March 18, 1882.

**justice to, in.** In order to be fair and impartial to.

**justice, to do one.** To be fair and just to another.

James, *to do him justice*, would gladly have found out a third way

MACAULAY *History of England* IV, 1, 463

**justice, to do oneself.** To carry out a task or mission in a way that the duty performed reflects credit to oneself; do anything in a manner worthy of one's abilities.

## K

**kack-handed.** Left-handed.

**Kaffir.** [Brit. Stock Exchange.] South African mining shares.

**Kailyard School.** A group of Scottish writers who have drawn their themes from the home life of the Scots. Murray traces the application to a Scottish Jacobite song used by Ian Maclaren—"There grows a bonnie brier bush in our *kailyard*"—as a motto in his story "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush."

**ka me, ka thee.** Help me and I will help you; one good turn deserves another: "a proverb all over the world."

SCOTT *Kenilworth* ch. v.

**kamerad.** German substitute for "surrender" during the World War.

A *comrade* is an equal, entitled to be received and treated on a basis of equality. Neither in the surrender of a German soldier nor in the capitulation of the Germany which has made this war can we admit the word "*Kamerad*."

HENRY VAN DYKE in *New York Times* Oct. 26, 1918.

**kam.** Askew; crooked.—**clean kam.** Not pertinent; quite apart.

SICANIUS This is *clean kam*.

SHAKESPEARE *Coriolanus* act iii, sc. 2

**Kanaka.** A Hawaiian, and in a broader sense, any native of the South Sea Islands.

We've shouted on seven ounce nuggets,

We've starved on a *Kanaka's* pay

R. KIPLING *Banjo Song*

**Kangaroo droop.** A feminine affectation in which the hands are held close to the breast and permitted to hang as if paralyzed. Compare GRECIAN BEND and ROMAN FALL.

**Kangaroo voting.** [U. S. Pol.] The Australian ballot, which with some modifications is practically universal in the United States.

**keelhaul.** To reprimand severely: from a former practise of the sea of hauling under the keel of a ship a sailor who has violated the rules.

An effigy of Judas, which the crew amuse themselves with *keel-hauling* and hanging by the neck from the yard-arms. DANA *Before the Mast*, 147.

**keen.** Anxious; ready; desirous.

Religious professors . . . are just as *keen* about money

KINGSLEY *Serm Times* XIII, 217.

—**on the keen jump.** [U. S.] In a rush, on the go, also, busily engaged, working hard.  
**keep** occurs in the following idiomatic phrases: **keep abreast of or with.**

See under ABREAST.

—**for keeps.** [Colloq.] To be held in possession permanently for good — **to keep an act.** To participate in a disputation, as a candidate for an academic degree — **to keep a stiff upper lip.** To keep up your courage, spirits, stand firmly

It was keeping a *stiff upper lip* that carried General Jackson through a great many hard trials Major Jack *Downing* 401.

—**to keep at arm's length.** See under ARM — **to keep at it.** To persevere, persist — **to keep away.** [Naut.] To cause a boat to sail less close to the wind when sailing close-hauled — **to keep back.** 1. To maintain silence about, withhold. 2. To restrain — **to keep body and soul together.** To preserve or maintain life.

The Vascons once with Man's Flesh (as 'tis sed) *Kept Life and Soul together*

TATE in Dryden's *Juvenal* xv, 375.

—**to keep cases.** In the game of faro, to keep a record of the cards drawn from the dealing box to determine when any card is the only one of its denomination Hence the saying "to keep tab on the game," that is, to watch what is going on — **to keep company with.** See under COMPANY — **to keep down.** To repress or hold in subjection, to subordinate — **to keep dry.** [U. S.] To keep secret, maintain silence; hold one's tongue

Never let them get a chance at your sentiment, *keep that dry*

FRANCIS *Saddle and Moccasin* 295.

—**to keep from.** To abstain or refrain from; stay away from — **to keep good or bad hours.** To retire early or late — **to keep (her) to.** [Naut.] To sail (a boat) close to the wind — **to keep her way.** [Naut.] To maintain progress after the engine stops or the sails are lowered said of a vessel — **to keep house.** To maintain a home or residence for oneself and family; to conduct one's own establishment or business

Edward the Noble Prince . . . *kept his house* at Ludlow in Wales

MORE in *Grafton Chron* II, 761.

*I keep a Coffee house*

STEELE *Spectator* No 155

—**to keep in.** 1. To place in restraint, confine; detain, as refractory pupils in school. Your zeal becomes importunate . . . but learn to *keep it in*

ADDISON *Cato* act 1, sc 4

2. To maintain secrecy 3. To prevent from going out, as a fire 4. To supply one with 5. To remain within, as inside the house — **to keep or have in view.** To bear in mind, fix in the attention, as a purpose or an event — **to keep in with.** To keep in the good graces or favor of

He's violent enough in the House, but that's to *keep in with* his constituents.

BLACK *Yolande* III, v. 86.

—**to keep it dark.** To give no information about, to keep secret — **to keep it up.** To continue or persist in action — **to keep off.** 1. [Naut.] To point a vessel less close to the wind or to the shore 2. To ward off, avert — **to keep on.** To pursue the same course, continue; maintain as formerly — **to keep one going.** 1. To see that one is occupied 2. To provide for one — **to keep one's chapels.** [Eng Univ] To attend one's college chapel the minimum number of times required in a given term — **to keep one's countenance.** To preserve a calm demeanor; refrain from blushing or smiling — **to keep oneself to oneself.** To keep aloof from society; take no counsel with others — **to keep one's eyes open.** To be wideawake or on the alert, watch for advantage, present or future, also [Colloq. U. S.] **to keep one's eyes peeled.**—

**to keep one's foot.** [Bib.] To be decorous or circumspect — **to keep one's hand in.** See under **HAND** — **to keep one's head.** To carry oneself calmly under disturbing circumstances — **to keep one's head above water.** See under **HEAD** — **to keep one's own counsel.** See under **COUNSEL** — **to keep one's pecker up.** [Brit.] To maintain one's courage and resolution, keep one's head, cheer up, hold up one's chin — **to keep on foot.** To maintain as a standing army — **to keep open doors, house or table.** To show hospitality to, cater generously, as to friends, acquaintances, and parasites — **to keep (or hold) pace.** To continue at the same rate as, not fall behind, maintain on equal terms often used figuratively — **to keep quarter.** To retain one's station, remain on friendly terms — **to keep tab.** [U S.] To take note or a record of, make a memorandum of — **to keep term.** 1. [Eng. Univ.] To reside a definite time under prescribed conditions 2. [Eng.] To eat a prescribed number of dinners in the Hall of an Inn of Court, a necessary condition preceding a call to the bar Called also to **keep one's terms** — **to keep the ball rolling.** See under **BALL** — **to keep the bones green.** To keep oneself in good health; keep the marrow in one's bones,

Ye might . . . have gotten a Sherifdom . . . *to keep the bones green.*

SCOTT *St. Ronan's Well* i, 240.

— **to keep the corners up.** [U S.] To look after well, repair — **to keep the land aboard.** [Naut.] To proceed as near to land as safety will permit — **to keep to.** To accord in accordance with; abide by, as a rule, a promise, etc. — **to keep to oneself.** To withdraw from society; to be of a reserved disposition, or retiring in one's habits.

Content with each other, they *kept to themselves.*

J MASTERMAN *Scotts of Westminster* I, iv, 142.

— **to keep under.** To hold in restraint or subjection — **to keep up.** 1. To continue; maintain; as, to *keep up* one's courage, they *kept up* a discussion. 2. To maintain the same speed or pace as (another), not fall behind or fall short of. with *with.*

Don't walk so fast, I can hardly *keep up with* you W F ROE *Maygrove* II, vii, 272

3. To stay out of bed, especially with an effort to resist weariness or disease — **to keep with.** To associate, or keep up with

**keeper of the king's conscience.** [Gt. Brit.] The Lord Chancellor.

**keeping (with), in.** In harmony (with); suitable (to); appropriate.

His own costume of black coat, leathers and tops, was *in perfect keeping*

LEVER *C O'Malley* IV, 24.

**keeping (with), out of.** Out of harmony (with); inappropriate; unsuitable.

In what respect it is *out of keeping*; that is, what parts are too light, and what too dark

IMISON *School Art* II, 59.

**keeping-room.** 1. [New Eng.] A room used as a sitting-room by members of a household when they have no visitors or "company": distinguished from *parlor*. 2. [Eng.] A room occupied by an undergraduate at a university: distinguished from *bedroom*.

**ken.** [Brit. Slang.] A place frequented by disreputable characters, as a house frequented by tramps, thieves, etc. Sometimes qualified, as a **boozing-ken**, a drinking place, a **padding-ken**, a tramps' lodging-house, a **sporting-ken**, a resort frequented by hangers-on of betting-rings, the prize-ring, or race-tracks

The old woman (who kept the *ken*) made up a match for her with some men

MAYHEW *London Labour and London Poor* I, 336

**Kentish fire.** [Brit.] A volley of applause or a prolonged demonstration of impatience accompanied with catcalls and stamping of feet.

That peculiar beating of the feet known to a Dublin audience as *Kentish-fire* was heard

J H BUCKSTONE in *The Morning Post* London, Mar 22, 1865

**Kentish glory.** [Eng.] A large orange-brown moth with black and white marks—one of the most beautiful of the British moths originally found in Kent.

**Kentish rag.** [Eng.] A dark limestone used for building and found originally at Hythe, in Kent.

**Kentucky bite.** [U. S.] A grip in wrestling.

It was not difficult to perceive that in the Indian hug or *Kentucky bite* I should stand no chance. N. DANA *Mariner's Sketches* p. 147.

**Kentucky boat.** [U. S.] Square-built box-like flatboats in which, during pioneer days, goods were transported down the Ohio and Mississippi. In the course of the day we passed no fewer than thirteen arks, or *Kentucky boats*, going with produce to New Orleans. JOHN BRADBURY *Travels* 198.

**Kentucky pill.** [U. S.] A bullet.

**kettle of fish, a fine, nice, pretty or rare.** See under FISH.

**key of the street, to have the.** [Humorous.] To be locked out for the night.

You can't get in tonight, you've got the *key of the street*. DICKENS *Pickwick* XLVII.

**key of or to a place or position.** A place which gives its possessor control over the passage into or from a district, territory, or inland sea. Henry IV, King of Castile, gave it (Gibraltar) the arms it still bears, viz., a castle with a key hanging to the gate, alluding to its being the *key to the Mediterranean*. Penny *Cyclopædia*.

**Keystone State.** Pennsylvania: so called as the seventh or center of the original thirteen states.

**khaki.** [Anglo-Ind.] Dusty or dust colored. a Hindu word. Uniforms worn by some Punjab regiments at the siege of Delhi of this color afforded poorer targets than the brilliant red of the British uniform. In 1882 the color was recommended to be substituted for scarlet in the British army, and has since been used in the field.

**kick.** [Biblical] I. n. An objection; a protest; a complaint. II. v. To complain, object or protest.

Wherefore *kick* ye at my sacrifice and at my offering, which I have commanded in my habitation. I Samuel ii, 29.

—**I can't kick.** [U. S.] I have no reason for complaint a favorite phrase with persons who believe that everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

—**there's no kick coming.** [U. S.] There is no reason for complaint.

"There's no *kick* coming on this, stranger," said one wiry, dark-haired fellow.

*The Evening Post*, New York, April 15, 1909.

—**to kick against the pricks.** [Biblical] To strike the foot against the goads, as an ox in plowing, hence, to try to resist the irresistible, be refractory to one's own disadvantage.

And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. it is hard for thee to *kick against the pricks*. Acts ix, 5.

*Kicking against the pricks* of the constitution, and of course, against nature.

E. F. BURR *Ad Fidem* i, 4.

**sick in.** [U. S.] Contribute your share; pay up.

**sick in it, the.** [U. S.] The alcoholic strength of a beverage, or degree of fermentation attained.

**sick over the traces.** [Colloq.] To throw off restraint, to go the pace: a phrase from the stable.

He is inclined to *kick over the traces*, but I'll whip him in a little.

H. KINGSLEY *Ravenshoe* xliii.

**sick or strike the beam.** To rise in a balance; be light in weight.

Weighed against your lying ledgers must our manhood *kick the beam*?

WHITTIER *The Pine-tree* st. 2.

**sick the bucket.** [Slang] To die.

I've very little doubt that Sir Arthur, selfish pig though he is, will do the right thing in the end before he *kicks the bucket*. GRANT ALLEN *Tents of Shem* X.



**kick up one's heels.** [Slang.] See under **HEELS**.

**kick up or raise the dust, a row.** [Colloq.] See under **DUST**.

**kicker.** [U. S.] One who protests, objects or rebels; also, one who bolts his party, friends or associates.

He who takes his own course is a *kicker* or bolter

BRYCE *American Commonwealth* ii, 459.

**kicks than half-pence, to get more.** To receive more blame than profit.

"Which is like the monkey's allowance, I suppose," said the traveller, "*more kicks than half-pence*"

SCOTT *St Ronan's Well* xxxiv.

**kickshaw.** A trifle or gewgaw; a thingumbob or nicknack.

A joint of mutton, and any pretty little tiny *kickshaws*, tell William, cook

SHAKESPEARE II *Henry IV* act v, sc 1.

**kicksies.** [Brit.] Trousers.

A pair of Kerseymere *kicksies*, any colour, built very slap-up

MATHEW *London Labor* i, 53.

**kicksy-wicksy.** A man's wife; a playful allusion in Shakespeare's

"All's Well That Ends Well," act ii, sc. 3.

**kickworthy.** [U. S. Literary.] Deserving ignominious punishment; worthy of being kicked: an idiom probably formed by James Branch Cabell, and occurring in his Millicent stories.

**kid or kiddy, n.** A child of either sex; a youngster.

**kidnap.** To steal a child: originally thieves' slang, from *kid*, a child and *nap* to steal.

**kidney.** Kind, sort, class, temperament, disposition; hence, **two of a kidney**, two of one mind.

It was a large and rather miscellaneous party but all of the right *kidney*

DISRAELI *Endymion* xvii

**Kilkenny cats, to fight or quarrel like.** To fight or wrangle until nothing is left: from the Irish legend of two cats said to have fought till only their tails remained: supposed to refer to the destructive contest between Kilkenny and Irishtown.

The tactics of the *Kilkenny cats* by which the Sultan kept hold of the wretched island were hideously cruel

*Spectator* Dec, 1887.

**kill, dressed to.** Dressed in an irresistible, bewitching or charming manner.

**killing.** [Brit.] Irresistible, fascinating, bewitching.

Mr Joseph Sedley . . . was actually seated tête-tête with a young lady, looking at her with a most *killing* expression

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* IV.

—**perfectly killing.** [Eng.] Very funny; ridiculous, absurd —**to make a killing.**

[U S.] To make a big profit; earn a large sum, make a high score.

**kill the goose that lays the golden egg.** To deprive oneself of a source of income or well-being.

The Greek fable says a countryman had a *goose that laid golden eggs*; thinking to make himself rich, he killed the goose to get the whole stock of eggs at once, but lost everything

BREWER *Phrase and Fable*.

**kill time.** To occupy or entertain oneself while waiting, as between appointments.

**kill two birds with one stone.** See under **BIRD**.

**kinchin lay.** [Brit. Thieves' Slang.] Stealing from children.

"Ain't there any other line open?" "Stop," said the Jew . . . "the *kinchin lay*."

DICKENS *Oliver Twist* xli.

**kind of.** [U. S.] Rather, somewhat corrupted to **kind a** and **kinder**.

I confess that your ideas, which are new to me, look *kinder* reasonable

D P THOMPSON *Locke Amsden* 18

I was *kind of* provoked at the way you came up *Massachusetts Spy* Jan 6, 1830.

**kind, in.** 1. With something of the same sort, as, to repay a blow *in kind*.

2. Specif., in goods or produce instead of money.

Their revenues were mostly paid, not in money, but *in kind*, such as corn, wine, and cattle

BUCKLE *History of Civilization* iii, 329.

**King Log.** A person who experiences temporary popularity only to be disregarded later, as "King Log," who was replaced by "King Stork" in Æsop's fable of the "Frogs Asking for a King."

**king of terrors.** Death personified. *Job* xviii, 14.

**kingdom come.** The world after death.

Old Aunt Duncan has gone to *kingdom come* at last

MISS BRIDGMAN *Robert Lynne* I, xii, 184.

**King's, Queen's, or Crown's evidence, to turn.** [Brit. Law.] To confess oneself guilty of a crime and proffer oneself as a witness to testify against accomplices; to give evidence for a State under such conditions in criminal prosecutions.

One of the gang, to save his own life, has *turned evidence* DE FOE *Col. Jack* 79.

**king's evil.** Scrofula: once supposed to be curable by a monarch's touch.—called also **royal evil**.

**link.** A crochet, twist, device, knot, especially a mental trait; sometimes referring to the hair.

Adair too had his *link*. He believed all the Indians of America to be descended from the Jews.

THOMAS JEFFERSON *Letter to John Adams*, June 11, 1812

**kinnikinnick.** A mixture used by American Indians as a substitute for tobacco or a blend with it, usually sumac leaves, willow bark, and sage-leaf.

I observed that they did not make use of tobacco, but the bark of the *Cornus sanguinea*, or red dog wood, mixed with the leaves of *Rhus glabra*, or smooth sumach

This mixture they call *kinnikinnick*

JOHN BRADBURY *Travels in America* 91

**kiss** is used in various idiomatic phrases, as: **kiss and be friends.** To become reconciled and seal the reconciliation with a kiss.—**kiss away.**

1. To remove by kissing, as, Mother *kissed* the pain away 2. To lose by neglecting, as one who devotes his time to amours

We have *kissed away* Kingdoms and Provinces

SHAKESPEARE *Antony and Cleopatra* act iii, sc 10.

—**kiss the cup.** Drink —**kiss the dust.** Be overthrown, be compelled to submit, yield, be humiliated, ruined or killed —**kiss the ground.** To do homage as by prostrating oneself also, to be humiliated —**kiss the hand.** To press one's lips to the hand of a sovereign said especially of a British minister on acceptance of office, to kiss the tips of one's fingers, in sign of waiving the kiss to another

*Kissing the hand* to the statue of a god was a Roman form of adoration.

SPENCER *Principles of Sociology* vol ii, pt iv, p. 123.

—**kiss the hare's foot.** To be late, as for dinner: arrive after the hare has left

—**kiss the post.** To be shut out, as one arriving after closing time or too late —**kiss**

**the rod.** To accept chastisement submissively

Yet he durst not but *kiss his rod*, and gladly make much of his entertainment.

SIDNEY *Archæa* II, 190.

**kiss curl.** A small curl on the forehead or cheek; a beau catcher, love-lock.

If I had worn those pastry-cook's girl's ornaments called *kiss-curls* the gum would have melted off in a minute.

*Punch* xxxi, 219.

**kissing-crust.** [Brit.] The soft crust between two loaves; the under-crust of a pudding or pie.

How he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of *kissing-crust*, to a tender juvenile.

LAMB *Essays of Elia* Ser 1, *Chimney Sweepers*

**kiss-me-quick.** 1. A ringlet in front of the ear; a kiss-curl. 2. A small bonnet worn formerly at the back of the head. 3. The pansy; also, one of several other plants.

**kit.** 1. A workman's outfit of tools; also, luggage; baggage, or a collection of anything. 2. A set of persons viewed as a whole.

I'll show you a better gentleman than *the whole kit* on you put together.

DICKENS *Great Expectations* 11

**kith and kin.** Originally, country and kinsfolk; friends and relatives.

**kittle.** [Scot.] Hard to manage; skittish; ticklish; nervous; fidgety.

—**kittle-cattle.** Fussy nervous fidgety people.—**to be kittle cattle to shoe.** To be difficult to manage.

**kitty.** In poker and other card-games, a pool to which all players contribute, as to defray the expenses of rent, refreshments, etc.

**knee-high.** Reaching up to or as high as the knee.—**knee-high to a bantam grasshopper,** etc. [U. S.] Very small, of short dimensions. The comparison has varied from time to time, being made originally to a "*mosquito*," in 1824, then to a "*bumble-bee*" (1833), "*a splinter*" (1841), a "*milkstool*" (1853), "*a huckleberry*" (1854), "*a bantam*" (1856), "*a cocksparrow*" (1856), "*a grasshopper*" (1860), "*a duck*" (1904)

**knife.** [U. S. Pol.] To attack in secret manner.

[Mr Hughes] thrives on ambushes, pitfalls and *knifings*. When the bosses call him dead, he begins to feel how young he is

*The Evening Post*, New York, April 15, 1909

—**before one can say knife.** [Brit] Instantly, before one could say Jack Robinson; quick as a wink.

**knock** is frequently used idiomatically, as in the following phrases:—**to**

**knock.** [U. S.] To be given to faultfinding or captious criticism; to decry —**to knock about.** 1. To wander or roam about aimlessly; also, to go from one country to another seeking experience, work, or the like as, after *knocking about* the world he settled in New York 2. To use roughly and carelessly, batter, spoil, as, the furniture had been badly *knocked about* —**to knock down.** [U. S.] 1. To embezzle, as fares or rob the cash register 2. To introduce or make known to each other; also, substantively, an introduction 3. In auctions, to assign to the highest bidder, formerly always by rapping three times with a mallet 4. To lay over on her beam-ends, as a ship in a gale 5. To call upon for a song 6. To make fast by flattening the end, as a rivet. 7. To take apart for convenience of shipping or storage 8. To lower in price or degree 9. To summon (one) downstairs by knocking at his door 10. To squander in riot or drink —**to knock higher than a kite.** To drive, as by striking higher than a flying kite; "send flying" —**to knock in.** [Eng Univ] To knock on a college gate after closing hours to gain entrance, also, to obtain admittance in this manner —**to knock off.** 1. To leave off, stop work 2. To perform or write offhand, as, to *knock off* a poem 3. To deduct; as, to *knock off* 10 per cent for cash 4. To compel to veer to leeward, as a vessel when struck by the sea on the weather bow usually in the passive. 5. To die 6. To strike off as by a blow 7. To dispose of or do hastily, dispatch —**to knock on (or in) the head.** To render inefficient, frustrate, as, our plans are all *knocked on the head* —**to knock one's head against.** To come into collision with, be brought face to face with facts or conditions —**to knock out.** 1. [Pugilism] To disable, as by a blow in a prize-fight, hence, to overcome entirely 2. [Eng Univ] To knock on a college gate after closing hours to gain exit 3. [Fox-hunting] To lose the trail or scent of the fox, as by hounds in the chase 4. To construct hastily or roughly 5. [Eng] To outbid or purchase at one's own price, as at an auction —**to knock out of the box.** [Baseball] To hit a pitcher's delivery so freely as to cause him to be removed from the game.—**to knock over.**

[Colloq.], to give up, die—to **knock spots out of** [Slang, U S] To beat or outdo thoroughly—to **knock the bottom, stuffing, wedding, lining, filling, or inside out of**. 1. To put out of commission or use, to thrash, finish

This cool ignoring of all that had happened that day in modifying their relations at one blow, *knocked the bottom out of* all his thinking for the past week

BELLAMY *Dr Heidenhoff's Process* 52

—to **knock the spots off**. [U S] 1. To excel, surpass 2. To thrash, confound. perhaps from the use of a playing card as a target for pistol practise—to **knock together**. 1. To build or make roughly or in a hurry, as, to *knock together* a set of shelves 2. To collide—to **knock under**. To confess oneself beaten, give up, yield—to **knock up**. 1. To rouse (as a sleeper from sleep) by knocking on the door 2. To exhaust utterly, tire out, as, to be *knocked up* with the day's exertion 3. To make up hurriedly, as a program 4. To build hastily, as a temporary shelter 5. To gain by one's labor or skill, as a high score at cricket 6. To put an end to, break up, impede, destroy, as a business through mismanagement 7. [Vulgar, U S] To make pregnant—to **knock up against**. To meet accidentally or encounter suddenly

**knockabout**. I. a. 1. Fitted for traveling in comfort; as, a *knockabout* skirt or suit. 2. Adaptable to all kinds of work. 3. Characterized by slapstick buffoonery and noisy repartee II. n. 1. A slapstick comedian 2. A dory-like boat with centerboard or keel, and carrying a mainsail and jib. 3. A roustabout or man of all work, an Australian term

**knocker**. 1. [U S] A habitual faultfinder, a hypercritic. See to **knock** 2. [Gt Brit] One whose dress, carriage, and general appearance commands admiration—**up to the knocker**. [Brit] 1. In sound condition, comparing satisfactorily with the sample, equal to the occasion, up to the standard or mark 2. In the height of fashion, perfect in appearance

**knock-out drops**. [U. S.] A drug used to stupefy, as by putting into a drink, for purposes of robbery.

**know** is used idiomatically in the following phrases:—**I don't know what**.

Something more than is mentioned; as, "He is general manager, a millionaire and *I don't know what*"—**I know not what**. I do not understand used to express indefiniteness as in making a computation, as, it amounts to *I know not what*

Tears, idle tears, *I know not what* they mean

TENNYSON *Princess* IV, 21

—**I want to know**. [New Eng] Is it possible! used to express surprise—not that I know of. Not to my knowledge—not to know B from a bull's foot. To be illiterate the imprint of a bull's hoof bearing a slight resemblance to the letter B—to **know how**. To have the necessary information, intelligence, or understanding—to **know of**. To demand, inquire—to **know one's way about, around, a thing or two, the ropes, the time o' day, one's book, life, how many blue beans make five**. To be well informed, wide awake, experienced, equal to the occasion, to know what's what

I think I have shown him that we in Virginia *know a thing or two*

THACKERAY *The Virginians* XVIII

—to **know the ropes**. To be acquainted with the method of procedure in any business, or the ways of a house—to **know the time of day**. Same as to **know what's o'clock**—to **know what one is about**. To appreciate fully the possible results and understand clearly the consequences of anything one may do, be prudent and far sighted—to **know what's o'clock, to know what's what**. To be shrewd and well-advised—to **know where the shoe pinches**. To know from experience the reason for or cause of trouble

**Know-Nothing**. [U. S.] A member of the **American party**, a political organization active from 1853 until 1856, of which the chief principle was that persons of foreign birth or (subsequently) those who had not been twenty-one years in the United States, should have no part in the government Its members were called *Know-Nothings*, because, the party being originally organized as a secret society, its members professed at first to know nothing about it.

**knuckle down or to**. 1. To apply oneself assiduously to a task. 2. To give way; yield.

**knuckles, to rap (one's).** To punish severely.

A severe rap on my moral *knuckles* from my conscience

MARY KINGSLEY *West Africa* 390.

**knuckle under.** To give way to; submit.

They must all *knuckle under* to him

MISS BRADDON *Mount Royal* II, iv, 63

**kosher.** [Heb.] Permitted by or fulfilling the requirements of the Mosaic law; clean; pure: said usually of food; opposed to *tref*. Used to designate a shop or store where kosher food is sold.

"I hope there'll be nothing in the way of your getting *kosher* meat, Mordecai. For you'll have to trust to those you live with"

GEORGE ELIOT *Daniel Deronda* vol ii, p 186.

**kotow or kowtow.** To make obeisance: from the Chinese custom of touching the ground with the forehead, as an indication of respect, submission, or veneration.

The Marquess *kowtowed* like a first-class Mandarin, and vowed that her will was his conduct

DISRAELI *Vivian Grey* II, xii

**kudos.** Glory and honor; renown; publicity: from the Greek *kydos*, glory.

Mr Smalls gained *kudos* by offering to give the luncheon at his rooms.

CUTHBERT BEDE *Verdant Green* III, ix.

**Ku Klux Klan.** [U. S. Hist.] 1. A secret society, organized in many of the Southern States after the Civil War, to prevent negroes or Northerners from gaining ascendancy in the South. The organization warned, expelled, whipped, or murdered persons obnoxious to it, and long overawed the negroes, but was finally disbanded by the United States military forces under General Forrest in October, 1871, and revived on Stone Mountain, near Atlanta, Ga., Thanksgiving night, 1915. In a series of articles, the last published Sept. 26, 1921, the *New York World* described the new organization as a money-making scheme to foster racial and religious hatred.

Adventurers swarmed out of the North, as much the enemies of one race as of the other, to cozen, beguile and use the negroes. The white men were roused by a mere instinct of self-preservation—until at last there had sprung into existence a great *Ku Klux Klan*, a veritable Empire of the South, to protect the Southern country.

WOODROW WILSON *History of the American People*.

2. A member of this society

**kultur.** [Ger.] The organized efficiency of a nation.

The right translation of *kultur* seems to be everything in organized civilization except culture. For true culture the Prussian has no use—he despises and dislikes it; its opposite, which is aggressive war, he thinks noble and exhilarating.

SIR OLIVER LODGE *The War and After*.

# L

**L's, the three.** [Naut.] Lead, latitude, and lookout. W. CLARK RUSSELL.

The phrase as interpreted by seamen signifies that careful use of the first, by sounding, a perfect knowledge of the second, and the persistent performance of the third will keep a mariner from running his vessel ashore.

**La!** The Anglo-Saxon hail and equivalent to the modern American greeting "Hello!" Sometimes amplified to "La you!"

*La you!* Now, you hear! SHAKESPEARE *A Winter's Tale* act ii, sc. 3.

**labor of love.** Work undertaken without expectation of compensation, for the love of the work itself or of the person for whom it is done.

**laboring oar, to take the.** To assume the most laborious task or accept the most responsible position in an enterprise.

**labor with.** To present to or discuss with, presenting arguments or pleas in support; as, the counsel *labored with* the jury for three hours.

**laced mutton.** [Slang.] A harlot. SHAKESPEARE *Two Gentlemen of Verona* act i, sc. 1.

**lace one's coat or jacket.** [Slang.] To flog; trounce.

I was so laced for it, that comparatively to my punishment Bridewell whipping is but a pastime R. HEAD *English Rogue* i, 27.

**lace one's coffee, tea, etc.** To add brandy, rum, or other spirits to.

Talk is like tea; it wants lacing with something a bit stronger

MILLIKENS 'Arry Ballads.

**lady.** A woman in authority, especially one who directs the affairs of a household. The word is used in many combinations of which the meanings are not self-evident—**extra lady.** A female stage performer without a speaking part—**ladies' companion.** A reticule or handbag for women, frequently fitted with hand-mirror, powder-puff, purse, etc—**ladies' man.** A man given to paying excessive attention to women or one who is fond of their society—**Ladies' Peace.** A peace negotiated by Margaret of Austria and Louise of Savoy, signed at Cambrai in 1529—**ladies' pocket.** A plant, the touch-me-not—**ladies' sea.** The tradewind region of the N. Atlantic, so easy of navigation that even a girl might take the helm a translation of a term used by early Spanish navigators—**ladies' tobacco.** Any one of various plants of the aster family, commonly called **everlasting**, especially **mouse-car everlasting** (*Antennaria plantaginifolia*)—**lady-altar,** *n* An altar in a lady-chapel—**lady-bell.** A bell with which the angelus is rung—**lady-bird.** A small red or yellow spotted beetle, useful in agriculture. Called also **lady-bug.**—**Lady Bountiful.** A charitable woman from a benevolent dame in Farquhar's play "The Beaux' Stratagem"—**lady-bracken.** A plant, the common brake—**lady-cat.** The channel-catfish—**lady-chair.** A seat formed by two persons with their hands, each seizing with one hand his opposite forearm and with the other the forearm of his fellow.—**lady-chapel.** A chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary—**lady-cow.** A ladybird—**Lady day.** A day observed in honor of the Virgin Mary, and commemorating some occasion in her life, the feast of the Annunciation, observed March 25—**lady-finger.** A variety of potato—**lady-help.** A woman in reduced circumstances who, for slight remuneration, assists in household cares and expects to be treated as one of the family—**lady in waiting.** In England, a lady of the royal household in attendance at court—**lady-killer.** [Humorous.] A man supposed to be peculiarly fascinating to women—**lady-killing,** *n.* The arts or manners of a lady-killer—**lady-love.** A woman who is beloved; sweetheart—**ladymeat.** Food given to the poor—**Lady of Babylon.** The scarlet woman of Rev. xvii, a term of abuse—**lady of dower.** A dowager—**lady of easy virtue.** A woman of equivocal reputation.

Some woman of easy virtue, about whom they knew nothing, lived in another flat.

*The Standard* London, March 21, 1890.

—**lady of the bedchamber.** A peeress who is one of the personal attendants upon the British queen.—**lady of the manor.** A lady having control of a manor, also, the

wife of the lord of a manor — **Lady psalter** The psalter used in the worship of the Virgin Mary — **Lady quarter** [Eng.] The quarter in which Lady day (March 25) occurs — **lady's-bedstraw**. 1. A perennial herb having yellow flowers, naturalized in the United States. 2. A low-growing shrub of the East Indies, with white flowers — **lady's-bower**. A flower (*Clematis vitalba*) — **lady's clover**. The common wood-sorrel — **lady's-comb**, *n*. A plant, Venus's-comb — **lady's cushion**. The sea-pink — **lady's-delight**. The pansy — **lady's-eardrops**. A fuchsia — **lady's-finger**. 1. A small cake so called from its shape. 2. [Brit.] A tapering glass for spirits. 3. A lobster's gill or a part of its leg — **lady's-garters**. Ribbon-grass — **lady's-glass**. The Venus's looking-glass — **lady's-glove**. A flower, the purple fox-glove — **lady's-gown** *Scots Law* A present sometimes given to a vender's wife by a vendee upon her relinquishing her life-interest in the property sold — **lady's-hair**. The quaking-grass — **lady's ladder**. [Naut.] Ratlines spaced closely together, forming short steps — **lady's looking-glass**. Same as VENUS'S LOOKING-GLASS — **lady's-milk**. A plant, the milk-thistle — **lady's-needlework**. [U S.] The erect hedge-parsley — **lady's-nightcap**, *n*. A flowering plant, the hedge-bind-weed — **lady's paintbrush**. [U S.] The orange hawkweed — **lady's-purse**. A plant, the shepherd's purse, a common weed with white flowers and a pod, whence its name — **lady's-seal**. One of two plants, the black bryony or Solomon's seal, with greenish flowers — **lady's-shoes**. The European columbine — **lady's-shoes-and-stockings**. The bird's-foot trefoil — **lady's-signet**. Same as LADY'S-SEAL — **lady's-slipper**. An orchid or the garden-halsam — **lady's-smock**. The cuckoo-flower — **lady's-thimble**. The harebell — **lady's-thistle**. The blessed or holy thistle — **lady's-thumb**. A common species of *Polygonum* with dense rose-colored flowers, and lanceolate leaves often with a dark triangular or lunar spot near the middle — **lady's-tobacco**. [U S.] The pearly or plantain-leaf everlasting — **lady's-tresses**. An orchid so called from the resemblance of the spirally arranged flowers to braided hair — **lady's wind**. [Naut.] A gentle breeze — **Lady-tide**. [Eng.] The period of time around Lady day — **leading lady**. The leading actress of a theatrical company — **Our Lady**, the Virgin Mary — **perfect lady**. A well-behaved woman, the phrase is frequently used ironically implying a woman of easy virtue.

**lag**. [Brit.] A convict or ticket-of-leave-man; a transported criminal who has returned.

He fell in with two old *lags* who had a deadly grudge against the chaplain.

CHARLES READE *Never too Late to Mend* IX.

**lagged**. [Brit.] Sentenced; imprisoned.

I should not much like to have him *lagged* for forgery.

SCOTT *St. Ronan's Well* XXXI.

**lagnappe, lagniappe**. [Louisiana.] A present or gratuity offered to a customer, as when a shop-keeper gives a child a cake or stick of candy free with a small purchase. The word is Louisiana Creole-French. In New Orleans, *brotus*; in Spanish America, *pilon*.

**laissez-faire**. Literally, "let do," that is, allow matters to take their course; avoid interference; let alone.

The expression *laissez-faire* is said to have been employed before 1680 by Legendre, a merchant, in reply to a question of Colbert concerning the needs of industry.

*New Internat. Encyc.* xi, 698.

**lam, lamb, lambaste**. To beat, thrash, trounce, or drub.

Stand off a while, and see how Ile *lambaste* him. DAVENANT *Britannia Triumphans*.

**lamb**. 1. [Brit.] A gull or simpleton; also, an easy-going person. 2. [U. S. Finance.] One who gets fleeced, as in dealing in stocks. 3. [U. S. Theat.] A member of the Lambs' Club, in New York.

**lamb's wool**. [Brit.] Hot ale, sweetened, spiced, and mixed with the pulp of roasted apples.

The ale, or to speak technically, the *lamb's wool*, was fitted for drinking.

SCOTT *Fortunes of Nigel*.

**lame duck.** 1. [U. S. Politics.] A Congressman, Senator, or other official who has been defeated for reelection. 2. [Brit. Finan.] A defaulter on the Exchange, who has to "waddle out of the Alley."

Frauds of which a *lame duck* on the stock-exchange would be ashamed

MACAULAY *Mirabeau* Miscellany ii, 95.

3. [Australian.] A scapegrace; ne'er-do-well.

**lamp.** A star. See Milton's *Comus* l. 200-204.—**lamp of heaven.**

The moon.—**lamp of Phœbus.** The sun.

**lamp-post.** A tall, lanky person; a longshanks.

**land.** 1. [Sports.] To deliver; get home; also, to gain or win.

Their object is to land one cunning blow

J. RUNCIMAN *The Chequers* 93

I landed a hundred golden mohurs by backing his new lot for the Governor General's cup

WHYTE MELVILLE *General Bounce* XX.

2. To obtain; secure; also, to catch, place, bring, or arrive.

**land** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases as, **how the land lies.**

How matters stand: usually with *see*—**in the land of dreams.**

Asleep, also, dreaming—**land-lubber.** An awkward or green seaman—**Land of**

**Bondage.** Egypt, so called by the Israelites—**Land of Cakes.** Scotland from the

oatmeal cakes for which it is famous—**land office business.** [U. S.] A rushing and prosperous business, such as that done by the United States Land Office when public lands were being sold

Theatres did no unusual business, but picture shows, which are quickly emptied and filled, reported a *land office business* *The Evening Post* New York Oct. 11, 1909

—**land of Nod.** Sleep

We flung ourselves down on our blankets and were soon in the *land of nod*

HUME NISBET *Bushranger's Sweetheart* 275.

—**Land of Promise.** Canaan, the land promised to Abraham by God. Hence, any region that points to prosperity—**land of shadows.** Same as the **LAND OF NOD.**

—**gone to the land of shadows.** Fallen asleep—**land of the seal.** The land

of the faithful, heaven. Applied by William Ewart Gladstone to Scotland because

of the loyal support it gave him—**Land of Steady Habits.** Connecticut, or the New

England group of States—**land knows, land sakes! or good land!** [U. S.] Exclamations of surprise or annoyance

Why are they called turnpikes? *The land knows*—I don't

MISS WARNER *Wide Wide World* XIV.

—**land shark.** [U. S.] A land-grabber

The hardy pioneer, the actual settler, and the *land shark*, the speculator, must [alike] pay this amount *MR HUNT* of New York, House of Reps, Feb. 22, 1841

—**landslide.** [U. S. Pol.] A vote so overwhelmingly in favor of a party or candidate as to bury the opposition under the ballots

There was a great *landslide* of votes to McClellan

*The Century* 1895, p. 734

—**to make land.** [Naut.] To sight the land, said of a vessel at sea

If we could *make land*, we should know where we were

R. H. DANA *Two Years Before the Mast* xxxii. 124

**land-grabber.** [U. S.] One who took advantage of tax laws to acquire lands intended for distribution among homeseekers.

Railroad grants to place large quantities of public lands in the hands of robbers and *land-grabbers*

MR RUFFIN of North Carolina, Speech in House of Representatives Feb. 20, 1861.

**lapis alami.** A slip of the pen.

**lapsus linguæ.** [L.] A slip of the tongue.

What have I done besides a little *lapsus linguæ*.

DRYDEN *Mart. Mar-all*. III.

**lapsus memoriæ.** A slip of the memory.

**large** is used idiomatically in several phrases as, **a large order:** A big undertaking; a difficult task.—**at large.** 1. In general; not included within certain definite limits; as, a Congressman *at large*, that is, one to represent the



State as a whole and not a particular district 2. Freely and without suppression; to the fullest extent

Stand up, I say, and tell thy tale *at large*.

KYD *Spanish Tragedy* act i, l. 347.

3. Not settled, fixed, or limited, as, the subject was left *at large* 4. At liberty, not yet captured; as, the murderer is still *at large*—*in large, in the large*. On a big scale, wholesale.—*large-natured*. Rich in sympathy, generous, liberal.

**lark.** A spree; a hilarious time; a frolicsome adventure.

**larrikin.** [Australian.] A boisterously rough or disorderly fellow; tough citizen; loafer; gangster; rowdy. A word probably derived from the Scottish *larrie* or *larry*, a jest; a practical joke; hence, mischievous fun, and *kin*, kind, race, relations—a practical joker.

The word has various shades of meaning between a playful youngster and a black-guardly rough

EDWARD E. MORRIS *Austral-English*

Bedouins, Street Arabs, Juvenile Roughs in London, Gamins in Paris, Bowery Boys in New York, Hoodlums in San Francisco, *Larrikins* in Melbourne This last phrase is an Irish constable's broad pronunciation of 'larking,' applied to the nightly street performances of these young scamps, here, as elsewhere, a real social pestilence

DAVID BLAIR in *Notes and Queries* July 24, 1875, p. 66.

**larrup.** To beat, thrash, rope-end, flog.

He *larruped* me once when I was a boy, for throwing stones at a cat

M. COLLINS *Transmigration* I, xii.

**lashings.** Plenty, abundance: used in Scotland and Ireland.—*lashings and lavins*. Plenty and to spare.

**late in the day, too.** Past the time for (interference, or action of any sort).

It is too *late in the day* for me to see the result

WASHINGTON *Letter Writings* XIII, 411

**late unpleasantness.** [U. S.] The Civil War.

The Louisiana Tigers, a corps of sharpshooters during the *late unpleasantness*

*Inter-Ocean* Chicago, March 7, 1888

**later on.** At a subsequent time afterward: a phrase in which *on* is redundant but which has been in use nearly a century.

**lather is half a shave, a good.** Careful preparation reduces the labor required; things done right to-day mean less trouble to-morrow.

**latter end.** The concluding years, months or weeks of a period of time: also, the end of a journey, course or life.

Death should never be spoken of in jest: for a man may play with almost anything safer than his *latter end*.

PALMER *Proverbs* 247

The *latter end* of the Rhine is not so romantic as its earlier career in Germany.

G. E. MATHESON *About Holland* 10

**laugh** occurs in several idiomatic phrases: as, *canine laugh*. 1. A

sneer; distorting the face to the likeness of a snarl. 2. [Pathol.] Prosopospasmus, sardonic laugh—*on the laugh*. On the point of, or in the act of, laughing—to have or get the laugh at, of, or on one.

To have or get the advantage of one—to have or get the laugh on one's side. To have or get the advantage—to laugh away. To drive off or away by laughing—to laugh down.

1. To compel by laughter to desist as a speaker 2. To compel by ridicule to be abandoned, as a scheme—to laugh in one's sleeve. To be merry inwardly while outwardly demure.

—to laugh off. To dismiss with a laugh; treat lightly or as of no account—to laugh one out of. To constrain one through ridicule to abandon, as a habit or custom—to laugh out. To laugh in spite of restraint, laugh aloud—to laugh out of (or on) the other side (or corner) of the mouth, laugh on the wrong side of the mouth or face.

To feel grieved, vexed, or disappointed, especially after exultation, boastfulness, or hilarity—to laugh to scorn. To treat with derision or mockery.

This was too much, and we *laughed him to scorn*.

W. D. HOWELLS *Venetian Life* 306.

**laughing-stock.** A person who is made the object of a joke or of ridicule; one who or that which is laughed at.

**launched into eternity.** 1. To die by hanging.

The platform from which he was to be launched into eternity.

*The Examiner* Nov. 30, 1812.

2. To die.

He was afraid his Soul should launch into Eternity without a guide to direct his Penitence.

MRS MANLEY *Power of Love* 1, 123.

**lavender, in.** 1. In pawn. 2. In prison.—to lay or put in lavender.

1. To put carefully aside for future use. 2. To pawn, leave in lodgings as security for debt. 3. To hide from the police. 4. To be imprisoned. 5. To be ill

(4) "The Marshalsea" . . . What of the Marshalsea?" "Why Sir," said the man, "the poor gentleman is laid up there in lavender" SCOTT *Fortunes of Nigel* XXII.

**law** is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **gibbet law.** Same as LYNCH-LAW.—**Halifax law.** A law under which one who commits theft in Halifax is to be executed on the **Halifax gibbet**, a form of guillotine.

At Halifax the law so sharpe doth deale  
That whoso more than thirteen pence doth steale,  
They have a jyn that wondrous quick and well  
Sends thieves all headless into heaven or hell

TAYLOR (the Water Poet) *Works* ii, (1630).

—**law of the Medes and Persians.** [Biblical.] The prototype of laws that are unchangeable, hence, anything immutable

Once given, like the law of the Medes and Persians, it altereth not.

RIDER HAGGARD *Dawn* XXXV.

—**to give the law to.** To control without question, exercise undisputed power over.

—**to go to law.** To appeal to court for the settlement of any matter, enter suit.

—**to have the law in one's own hands.** To have power to redress a grievance or wrong —to have or take the law of. To bring action against, sue

A fellow famous for taking the law of Every Body ADDISON *Spectator* No 122

—**to lay down the law to.** To declare one's duty or obligation, advise in a dictatorial manner —to take the law into one's own hand. To punish an offender without the help or decree of a court.

**lawyer, high or highway.** [Brit.] A highwayman, or mounted robber; also, a footpad.

The thiefe that commits the robbery, and is cheife clerke to St. Nicholas, is called *high lawyer* DEKKER *Belman of London* III, 151 (Grossart, 1885).

**lay** is used idiomatically in many phrases.—**by or on the lay.** On shares.

—**in lay.** Laying: said of fowls.—**kinchin lay.** [Thieves' Cant.]

See under KINCHIN.—**lay-away.** A vat in which hides are laid to absorb the tann liquor, also, the liquor itself.—**lay baptism.** Baptism administered by a lay person

—**lay brother.** 1. A layman. 2. A serving brother in a monastery, under vows and wearing the dress of the order, but not in holy orders.—**lay-by.** 1. Still or sluggish river-water, where barges out of commission can be laid by. 2. Anything laid by, particularly, money or earnings saved, cash savings.—**lay clerk.** A layman who leads the congregation in the responses and otherwise assists in the church services

—**lay-down.** Turned or folded over: said of a collar opposed to *standing* —**lay-figure.** A model to hang drapery upon or to put in a certain attitude for the use of an artist; hence, one who is a mere puppet or catspaw in the hands of others.—**lay lord.** [Gt. Brit.] A peer who is not a lawyer, opposed to *law lord* —**lay of the land.**

The manner in which something lies or is situated, relative arrangement, general contour or surface conformation.—**lay-over.** [U S] The end of a division of a railroad or other point where a train-crew has to remain over night or for some stated time.—**lay pope.** A layman who arrogates to himself the power or authority of the Pope

—**lay reader.** A layman authorized to read prayers in church.—**lay sister.** An inmate of a nunnery who does menial service.—**lay-woman.** A female member of the laity.—**layout.** [U S] A set of utensils or kit of implements or tools; as an opium layout, which includes pipe, lamp, and dope; a faro layout, the cards, box and green cloth: sometimes a meal. Often incorrectly used for *outfit* (q. v.) —to lay

**aboard.** See **ABOARD** —to lay about one. 1. To deal blows on all sides. 2. To exert oneself to the utmost —to lay a (or the) **course**. To set out for or sail toward a desired point without tacking used also figuratively —to lay a **fire**. [Eng.] To place wood, paper, and coal in a grate in suitable position ready for kindling —to lay a **ground**. To paint a surface as a foundation for other colors. —to lay a **hedge**. To trim a hedge by cutting the boughs partly through, and bending and interlacing them —to lay **aside**. 1. To put by or away, leave off, abandon, dismiss from thought; put away for a definite purpose. 2. To abandon; discontinue, cease to consider —to lay **asleep**. To lay down and put to sleep, also, to render heedless or negligent —to lay **at**. To aim at, as blows, an attack, etc., strike at. —to lay **at one's door**. To charge with the responsibility for something, accuse. —to lay **away**. To put by or in store, put from one, discard, bury, as, a small fortune *laid away*; to lay **away** unbelief —to lay **bare**. To expose —to lay **before**. To submit or present to, offer for examination, as, to lay a plan *before* an assembly, —to lay **by** 1. To put in store, save up. 2. To give up, as a bad habit. 3. [U S] To complete (and hence discontinue) the cultivation of a growing crop, as, to lay *by* cane. 4. To make ill or unfit for work frequently in the passive —to lay **by the heels**. To confine as by hobbling or placing in the stocks See **HEEL** —to lay **down**. 1. To give up, or resign, relinquish, as, to lay *down* the duties of office. 2. To declare, assert, or affirm, especially in an authoritative or dictatorial manner, as, to lay *down* the law. 3. To put away for the future, save up, as, to lay *down* provisions. 4. To build as a railroad, warship, etc. 5. To deposit as a stake or pledge, wager. 6. *Agric.* To turn land into pasture. 7. To place in a reclining position; as, lay the child *down*; to put upon the ground, a table, etc., as, he *laid down* his hat, also, to give or sacrifice (one's life, prospects, etc.), as, I will *lay down* my life for you. 8. [Sports] (1) To do one's best in a contest, as, he would not *lay down* to his work. (2) To permit an opponent to win, as in a prize-fight, in order to deceive the betting public —to lay **down one's arms**. To yield, surrender —to lay **emphasis, stress, or weight upon**. To treat as of special importance —to lay **fast**. To prevent from escaping —to lay **for**. To lie in wait for; now slang —to lay **hands on**. To seize or grasp —to lay **heads together**. To consult; confer, plan —to lay **hold of or on**. To seize or grasp, catch —to lay **in**. 1. To procure and store. 2. To eat greedily or voraciously. 3. To give a first rough coloring to (a painting). 4. To deliver, let loose, discharge, as, to lay *in* a blow. 5. To lay about one —to lay **in by the heels**. In horticulture, to bury the roots of a plant roughly or temporarily —to lay **in for**. To put in a bid for, also, to secure the possession or promise of —to lay **into**. To beat vigorously, give a thorough drubbing to —to lay **it on**. To exaggerate, as in relating an experience, do anything extravagantly, exorbitantly, or lavishly, to beat vigorously, also, to charge exorbitantly, as, the landlord did *lay it on*; also figuratively —to lay **low**. 1. To lie low, that is, to bide one's time; keep quiet, keep oneself in restraint. 2. To cast down, humble; abase —to lay **off**. 1. To take off and put aside, as clothes or a load. 2. To draft or plot; draw, put on paper, as a map. 3. [U S] To dismiss temporarily, as workmen. 4. To turn, as a boat, from any place, point, or object. 5. To leave one's work for the day, rest. —to lay **on**. 1. To apply with force, inflict, as blows. 2. To supply, as water or gas to a house. 3. To turn, as a boat, toward some point. 4. To acquire; gain (in flesh or weight). 5. *Print* To prepare for the press, or place in suitable position upon the press: said of paper. 6. To place upon the trail, instruct in the inner workings, dispute. 7. To put on a coating of paint, etc., hence, figuratively, to flatter excessively: used in the phrase to lay *it on thick*. 8. To wager, as, to lay one's hat *on* the result —to lay **one's bones**. To be buried used with phrase indicating the spot —to lay **oneself open to**. To expose oneself to —to lay **oneself out**. 1. To try to do one's best. 2. To conduct oneself in a manner to gain some special end, as, they *laid themselves out* to attract attention —to lay **on load**. [Archaic] To deal violent blows —to lay **open**. To make bare, expose; reveal —to lay **out**. 1. To spend. 2. To display or set forth. 3. To dispose the several parts of, make a, or arrange according to, plan; draft, as, to lay *out* grounds, to lay *out* the plot of a novel. 4. To intend or purpose (to do something) [5. To dress and place in position for burial, as a corpse. 6. [Slang] To disable, as by a blow, render incapable of further resistance —to lay **over**. 1. To cover over; overspread, overlay. 2. [U S] To be superior to; surpass.

A street that would *lay over* any street in Red Dog

BRET HARTE *Luck of Roaring Camp*

3. [U S] To reserve, as tracts of country from hunters, postpone, as a game, stop

on the way, as, we *laid over* a train, to rest —to **lay siege** to. 1. To invest with a hostile army, besiege. 2. To beseech or importune constantly —to **lay store on**. [Archaic] Same as to **set store by** —to **lay the corner-stone**. To begin the erection of a building; hence, to initiate something of importance.

I verily believe she *laid the cornerstone* of all her future misfortunes at that very instant. MARIA EDGEWORTH

—to **lay the land**. To cause the land to disappear below the horizon by sailing away from it.—to **lay to**. 1. To apply vigorously. 2. To impute to, charge upon; as, to *lay* a misdeed to one. Also rendered, to **lay to one's charge** (as a crime). 3. [Naut.] To lie to. 4. To attack or harass —to **lay together**. 1. To place side by side; add one to another. 2. To compare.—to **lay to heart**. To take into serious consideration, grieve or ponder over. Also rendered, to **take to heart**.—to **lay under**. To subject to, as, to *lay one under* restrictions —to **lay up**. 1. To put away for future use; store. 2. To confine, as by illness, disable. 3. To dismantle and put out of service, as a ship. 4. To place together and fasten, as by twisting the strands of a cable. 5. [Naut.] To head for a desired point —to **lay violent hands on**. To assault with intent to do bodily harm, murder —to **lay waste**. To ravage, as, the Danes *laid waste* the whole coast —**Welsh lay**. A variety of slate three feet long by two feet wide.

**lead astray**. To draw away from the path of rectitude, seduce; betray.  
**lead by the nose**. To conduct or control at will.

A mob of fools and knaves *led by the nose* in each generation by a few arch-fools and arch-knaves. KINGSLEY *Plays and Purit* 211

**lead off or out**. To make a beginning; go or act first; as in taking one's partner to a dance.

**lead on**. To allure or entice by exciting hope or desire in; attract; invite.

**lead one a dance**. See under DANCE.

**lead up a ball**. See under BALL.

**lead up to**. To bring about gradually.

Perhaps he had deliberately *led up to* this very point.

MCCARTHY *Hist Own Times* III, 381.

**leak out**. To come to general or public knowledge gradually or clandestinely.

We had heard rumors of such a ship to follow us, which had *leaked out* from the captain. RICHARD HENRY DANA *Two Years Before the Mast* XIV.

**leaps and bounds, by**. With extraordinary and unexpected rapidity; by sudden strides.

The figures showing the advance by *leaps and bounds* of Jewish pauperism year after year are no less striking. *The Spectator* 1887

**leap over the hedge before you come at the stile**. To be in great haste.

**leap-year**. A year of 366 days; a bissextile year. In the Julian and Gregorian calendars, every year divisible by four, except those divisible by 100 and not by 400, is a leap-year: so called because in that year an intercalary day, called bissextus, was added to February. Women claim the right to propose marriage during leap-years.

**least** is used in the following idiomatic phrases:—at least, at the least.

At the very lowest estimate; at any rate; in any event; nevertheless. —in the least, in least. In the smallest degree —least and most. The whole number; one and all, all —least said the soonest mended. A proverbial variation of "the fewer the words the shorter the quarrel."

Our Secretary of State reminds me of a maxim of his predecessor that *least said is soonest mended*. GOV. MORRIS in *Sparks Life & Writ* II, 289.

**leather medal**. [U. S.] An ironical award of doubtful honor.

A *leather medal* his reward should be,

A *leather medal* and an L.L.D.

*Harvardiana* III, 147.

**leather or prunella**. The human hide or that which covers it. In Pope's lines (*Essay on Man* iv, 204), the poet pointed out that merit

was of greater value than hide or clothing—the first being symbolized by *leather*, and *prunella* being used as symbolic of the parson's gown

Worth makes the man and want of it the fellow;

The rest is all *but leather and prunella*. POPE *Essay on Man* iv, 204.

The lines have been misinterpreted by Brewer, De Vere, T. M. Coan and others, and rendered "of little value or importance"

**leave, by your.** With your permission: an apology for taking a liberty. Used often ironically when some remark is made which will be unwelcome to the person addressed.

I am poor brother Lippo, *by your leave*

BROWNING *Fra Lippo L.*

**leave in the lurch.** Desert in the face of difficulty or trouble. See LURCH.

**leave in (or out in) the cold.** See under COLD, p. 97.

**leave off.** 1. To quit, as work. 2. To cease wearing or using, as clothing. 3. To cease associating with.

He *left off* all his old Acquaintance to a Man

STEELE *Spectator* No. 264.

**leech.** A parasite; one who lives by stealing or drawing the substance (money or property) from his victims; a blood-sucker.

**leek, to eat or swallow one's.** To retract something under humiliating circumstances.

He is come to me and brings me bread and salt yesterday, look you, and bid me *eat my leek*

SHAKESPEARE *Henry V*, v. 1, 10.

**lees to every wine, there are.** Nothing is perfect.

**left-handed.** Evil; untoward; sinister.

It shows that you are a man . . . that you would not be put off with *left-handed* cries

JONSON *Silent Woman* act iii, sc 2

—**left-handed compliment.** An expression not complimentary, tho perhaps made to seem so —**left-handed oath.** An oath with a mental reservation or one which is not binding on its maker —**left-handed wife.** A morganatic wife.

**leg** is used idiomatically in the following terms:

—**all legs and wings.** A flapper, a restless young girl —**in high leg.** In good spirits, cheerful, excited, gay —**on one's last legs.** Dying, literally and figuratively —**on or upon its legs.** Firmly established —**to change the leg.** To change the gait, as a horse —**to fall on one's legs.** See under FALL —**to get on one's hind legs.** To be excited or angry, as a horse on its hind leg. —**to get on one's legs.** 1. To get up to address the house, as in Congress, or the company, as at a public dinner. 2. To recover one's usual health, as after illness —**to give a leg up.** To assist in mounting anything by lifting or steadying the leg —**to give or show a clean pair of legs.** To decamp, run away —**to give leg-bail, or leg-bail and land security.** To break jail, escape from custody

I had concluded to use no chivalry, but to *give them leg-bail* of it, by . . . making for a deep swamp

ADAIR *American Indians* 277.

—**to have a bone in one's leg.** See under BONE. —**to have legs.** To have speed, hence, to have powers of endurance or staying power —**to have not a leg to stand on.** To have no support, have no ground for argument —**to have one's leg over the harrows.** To be out of control —**to have the legs of one.** To run faster than one —**to keep one's legs.** To stand without falling —**to make a leg.** To make a bow or curtsy, by bending and drawing back the leg —**to pull one's leg.** To obtain favors, especially money, from a person, as by cajoling, hoodwinking or deceiving —**to put or set one's best leg foremost.** Same as TO PUT ONE'S BEST FOOT FOREMOST. See FOOT —**to set a person on his legs.** To establish a person, especially in a financial way —**to shake a leg.** To dance, also, to hurry up —**to shake a free leg or loose leg.** To lead an irregular life, live freely [M] —**to stand on one's own legs.** To exist or proceed unaided or independently. —**to stretch one's legs.** To take exercise by walking —**to take to one's legs.** To run away.

**Legion, their name is.** They are so numerous as to be countless: in allusion to the Biblical phrase, "My name is Legion; for we are many." Mark, v. 9.

**legitimate.** 1. [Brit.] Flat racing as contrasted with hurdle-racing or steeple-chasing. 2. [Theat.] Drama; especially, Shakespearian drama, as opposed to comedy, burlesque, vaudeville, or the movies.

**leg-shop, leg-show.** A theater or performance in which short skirts or tights are worn by the women performers.

They're playing "Undine" at the Opera House, and some folks call it the *leg shop*.  
MARK TWAIN *Screamers*.

**lend** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases, as in **lend-a-hand club**.

An organization founded by Edward Everett Hale in 1871 for the purpose of aiding others. The organization's motto is.

Look up and not down,  
Look forward and not back,  
Look out and not in,  
Lend a hand!

—to **lend a deaf ear.** To refuse to listen —to **lend an arm or a hand, or helping hand.** See under **HAND** —to **lend an ear, or one's ears.** To listen with attention —to **lend out.** 1. To lend money or goods, a Shakespearian use 2. To let out lodgings or apartments 3. To issue books to borrowers with regulations as to their return within stated periods —to **lend wings.** To increase haste or speed

**length** is used in a number of idiomatic phrases as, **a great length.** A considerable degree of progress toward some end.—**at length.** 1. After a great while, finally, at last 2. At full length, without omission or contraction —**at full length** Stretched to the fullest extent, without abridgment

The fellow talks of Rogue and Rascal at *full length* STEELE *Englishmen* No 4.

—**length of days.** Long life; continued existence —to **go to one's length.** To act as one pleases to the limit of one's means —to **go or march to the length of.** 1. To go the distance or extent of, as, he *went to the length of* perjuring himself for her sake. 2. To go as far as, proceed to

**let** is used idiomatically in the following phrases.—**let alone.** 1. To abstain from doing something, or from interfering with a person or thing

Let him *alone*, let no man move his bones So they *let* his bones *alone* II *Kings* xxiii, 18.

2. [Colloq.] Not to mention, much less

It is hard to *get a gardener who can prune a gooseberry bush, let alone* raise a cucumber.

—**let-alone principle.** See LAISSEZ-FAIRE —**let be.** [Archaic] Stop; discontinue; hold off —**let-down.** A check or blow to one's self-esteem.

Leon. Do not draw the curtain

Paul No longer shall you gaze on't, lest your fancy

May think anon it moves.

Leon Let be, let be!

SHAKESPEARE *Winter's Tale* act v, sc. 3.

—**let her go, let her rip.** [U S.] Let it continue let it do all it can.

Another phrase, which often glides in music from the lip,

Is one of fine significance and beauty, "*Let her rip!*"

In the late panic, we have kept this mandate o'er and o'er,

And *let her rip* so frequently, that some can rip no more

PARK BEN JAMIN *Hard Times*.

—**let her go, Gallagher!** [U S.] Start away, go ahead! don't interfere See page 172.

*Let her go Gallagher* was first seen by the writer on posters advertising a dance at Salamanca, N Y, about 35 years ago My father was postmaster at that place, and working in the post-office were a number of very popular young ladies, who were always active in the social affairs of the town . . . These posters . . . referred . . . to the girls who worked for Gallagher

C E GALLAGHER, Youngstown, O, Letter to Editors Sept 15, 1921.

—to **let be.** To allow to remain undisturbed, leave off, cease from; not to interfere with —to **let blood.** To draw blood by opening a vein —to **let daylight into.** To expose to the light See also under **DAYLIGHT** —to **let down.** 1. To lower. 2. To reduce in esteem, conceit, expectation, etc 3. To make longer, as by releasing material caught or held up, as, to *let down* a dress by taking out tucks. 4. To soften,

as metal, by tempering 5 To yield or allow to be drawn; as, the cow *lets down* her milk readily —to **let down easy or gently**. To mitigate, as a payment or punishment; deal leniently with —to **let down the bars**. To cease from restraining by removing an obstruction —to **let drive**. See under **drive** —to **let fall**. 1. To spread abroad or spill, cause to tumble down, drop as, "the message that the bells *let fall*" JEAN INGELOW *High Tide* st 2 2. To mention accidentally or thoughtlessly.—to **let fly**. To aim a blow at

He *let fly* with such stoutness at the giant's head . . . that he made him let his weapon fall out of his hand

BUNYAN *Pilgrim's Progress*

—to **let go**. To release, lose one's hold of, allow to escape —to **let go by**. Not to notice, overlook —to **let in**. To insert or take in, as in a dress 2. To defraud —to **let into**. 1. To impart the knowledge of, as, to *let one into a secret* 2. To insert, as by embedding into 3 [Slang] To attack, abuse, vilify —to **let off**. 1. To discharge, explode, cause to go off, or let fly 2. To excuse from an engagement, duty, or penalty —to **let on**. To make known, divulge, tell, as, he never *let on* about the matter —to **let one have one's head**. To allow one to follow one's own course, free from restraint or control —to **let oneself go or loose**. To give expression to one's views or feelings without restraint —to **let out**. 1. To show the way out to 2. To suffer to escape, as foul air 3. To divulge, disclose, as, to *let out a secret* 4. To make larger by releasing a part previously fastened, loosen, extend, as, to *let out a cord*, or a tuck in a dress 5. To let on lease or for hire 6. To give out on contract 7 To be at an end or over, be dismissed, as, the teacher *let out* the class —to **let slide**. 1. To proceed without interference, take its own course "Let the world slide!"

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* Induction

2. To dismiss from one's thoughts, pass by, or let alone 3. To suffer to go by or away, lose without effort to retain, throw away —to **let slip**. To allow to escape, lose, miss —to **let the cat out of the bag**. See under **cat** —to **let up**. 1. To allow to get up, literally or figuratively 2. [U S] To lessen in severity, approach cessation, cease —to **let well (or well enough) alone**. To abstain from endeavoring to improve the condition of anything that is in satisfactory state

**letter** is used idiomatically in certain phrases as, **cable letter**: A communication limited to a fixed number of words to be forwarded by cable subject to a delay of possibly 24 hours —**day letter**. A communication sent by telegraph in the daytime but subject to delay for which it is forwarded at a reduced rate —**Jerusalem letters**. See **JERUSALEM** —**lettergram**. A long telegraphic communication subject to possible delay in delivery, on which special rates are made **A day lettergram** is subject to delivery on the day of dispatch, and a **night lettergram** on the next ensuing business day —**letter-head** 1. A printed heading at the top of a sheet of paper 2. [U S] A postage-stamp —**letter-man**. 1. [U S] A mail-carrier 2. [Gt Brit] A pensioner of Chelsea Hospital who drew extra pay on the ground of a letter from the sovereign —**letter missive**. 1. *Env* An official letter to persons, churches, or other bodies, about some matter of common interest 2. *Eng* A letter from the sovereign, expressing a wish, in reference to an ecclesiastical promotion 3. *Eng Law* A summons to appear in court 4. A letter from the chancery to a peer, peeress, or bishop, in lieu of a summons —**letter-money**. War funds received by Charles I in answer to his personal letters —**letter name**. In music, a letter used as a name or symbol for a tone, note, key, or degree —**letter of marque, letter of marque and reprisal**. A commission issued by a government authorizing a private person to take the property of a foreign state, or of its citizens or subjects, as redress for an injury done by such state or its citizens or subjects —**letter of orders**. A certificate that the person named has been admitted to holy orders or ordained —**letter of the law or agreement**. The exact, literal meaning or requirement of the words used —**letter-perfect**, *a* Having thoroughly memorized, as a speech said especially of actors —**letters clause, letters close**. [*Eng Law*] Closed and sealed letters sent to particular persons in the name of the sovereign distinguished from *letters patent* —**letters of administration**. A document issued by a court authorizing a person to act as administrator of an intestate estate —**letters of administration with the will annexed**. A document issued by a court authorizing a person to act as administrator under a will for which no executor is provided by the testator —**letters of safe-conduct**. [*Inter Law*] Letters issued by a belligerent power to citizens of a country with which it is at war exempting them from molestation and their merchandise from seizure.—**letters overt, letters patent**. An open docu-

ment, under seal of the government, granting some special right or conferring some title, especially, a document giving to the person named the exclusive right to use, make, or sell some invention—**letters requisitory**, **letters rogatory**. A written request from a court asking a court in another jurisdiction to secure evidence or ascertain facts for use in a case before the first court—**letters testamentary**. The document by which the proper court authorizes the executor or administrator to take charge of and administer a testator's estate—**letter-winged**. Having script-like markings on the wing, as an Australian kite—**letter-wood**, *n*. Same as **LEOPARD-wood**—**letter-worship**. Undue regard for the letter of a law or commandment—**night letter**. A telegraphic communication of a certain number of words, sent at night, at reduced rates, subject to possible delay. See **LETTERGRAM**—**open letter**. A letter ostensibly addressed to some individual, but intended and published for the public without sending it to the person addressed—**silent letter**. A letter in a word that is unsounded in the pronunciation of the word, as *c* in *come* and *b* in *lamb*—**Sunday letter**. A domical letter that is one of the first seven letters of the alphabet used to mark the relation of Sunday to the year and used as an aid in determining Easter—**week-end letter**. A telegraphic communication transmitted at reduced rates for delivery between a Saturday and Monday.

**levant**. To abscond; to welsch or cheat.

When he found she'd *levanted*, the Count of Alsace

At first turned remarkably red in the face

BARHAM Ingoldsbys *Legends*

**levanter**. One who levants, a welscher, defaulting debtor.

*Levancers*. These are of the order and number of Black-Legs

GILBERT PARKER *View of Society* 168

**level**. To bring to a level state or condition: used with *up* or *down*.

Sir, your Levellers wish to *level down* as far as themselves, but they cannot bear levelling up to themselves

JOHNSON in *Boswell's Life* (1763)

**level best, to do one's**. To exert one's powers to the fullest extent; do all one can.

**level-headed**. Having well-balanced judgment, shrewd.

There is a strong feeling among men whose *heads are level* that this Minstrel Variety performance is a bluff

BRET HARTE *Gabriel Conroy* VI, vii.

"The jury must be mad!"

"I guess not, Pat. They've the reputation of being a *level-headed* lot."

*Macmillan's Magazine* 1887.

**Liberty Hall**. A house in which one may do as one likes, where there is little formality and much freedom for members of the family and their guests.

Gentlemen, pray be under no restraint in this house, this is *Liberty Hall*, gentlemen; you may do just as you please here

GOLDSMITH *She Stoops to Conquer*. II.

**lick<sup>1</sup>**. [U. S.] A stroke, an effort, an attempt

Then I coiled up, and made up my mind to stay in America till I'd done some *big licks* in the sporting line

MISS BRADDON *Mount Royal* xiii.

**lick<sup>2</sup>**. [U. S.] A salt spring, or soil impregnated with salt, where wild grazing animals licked up the salt.

The springs at Big-Bone *lick* and other Kentucky *licks* are sources of saline waters derived from the older Palæozoic rocks

NAT. S. SHALER, *App. to Allen's American Bison*.

**lick and a promise, to give a**. To do something in a slovenly way; to work half-heartedly; to soldier or shirk one's job.

**lick into shape**. To bring into form or discipline by manipulation or instruction or drill.

I most want him to *lick* the new batch of recruits *into shape*

KIPLING *Myne Own People*, *Incarnation of Krishna* Mulvaney 131.

**lickspittle**. A toady; a sycophant.

Availing that they were a parcel of *sneaks*, a set of *lickspittles*, and using other epithets still more vulgar.

THACKERAY *Newcomes* xvii.



**lick the dust.** Same as BITE THE DUST

**lie down.** [U. S.] To give up, accept defeat; shirk; soldier.

**lie in one.** To be within one's power or ability.

**lie low.** To conceal one's thought or intention; to stay in hiding; to keep to one's bed.

**lie on one's hands.** To remain unspent, unsold, unemployed, idle.

**lie out of the whole cloth, a.** An utter falsehood—**black lie.** A malicious falsehood.—**white lie.** A false statement made without malice, as to save another's feelings.

All lies disgrace a gentleman, *white or black*

MARRYAT *Peter Simple*.

—to give the lie to. See under GIVE

**lie to.** [Naut.] To stop a ship in her course.

Take a turn around the capstan, and *lie-to* for the tide

STEVENSON *Treasure Island* 212.

**lie to one's work.** To apply oneself vigorously and steadily.

**lie upon.** To weigh upon as a duty, a responsibility, a burden.

The present distress of the war hath *lyen so long upon us*

W. HUBBARD *Happiness of the People* 49.

**lie with.** 1. To lodge or sleep with. 2. To have carnal knowledge of.

3. To belong to or be the duty of.

**life, as large as.** Life-size; often used humorously

An imposing looking Don, *as large as life*, and quite as natural

CUTHBERT BEDE *Verdant Green* I, vi.

**life, for my.** If my life depended on it. Rendered also, **for the life of me.**

I cannot, *for the life of me*, see why it should be struck out

W. E. GLADSTONE in *The Daily News* London, March 16, 1880.

**life-preserver.** 1. [U. S.] A spirit flask, a pocket pistol. 2. [Brit. & U. S.] A loaded cane.

**life, to the.** True to the original.

They please by being done under the life, or beside it, *not to the life*

LAMB *Ella* II *Stage Illusion*

**ift<sup>1</sup>.** [U. S.] To pay off, to discharge.

So then the spectral mortgage could never be *lifted*

STOCKTON *The Lady or the Tiger* 74

**ift<sup>2</sup>.** 1. To assist; to offer a seat in a vehicle or on horseback. 2. To steal cattle or horses. 3. [Journalese.] To pilfer the news from a competitor.

"Poley's Natural Theology is, from beginning to end, based on the lines of the Dutchman, whose very language has, in many instances, been coolly *lifted* by the English Church dignitary"

G. A. SALA *Illustrated London News* Nov. 24, 1883.

**ift up the eyes or face.** [Biblical] To look up or fix the attention; to look upward, as in supplication. *Job* xxii, 26, and *Psalms* cxxi, 2.

**ift up the head.** [Biblical.] To exalt or exult; to regain confidence; recover from depression. *Psalms* xxvii, 6.

**ift up the heel against.** [Biblical] To treat with insolence. *John* xiii, 18.

**ft or raise up the horn.** [Biblical] 1. To behave arrogantly or scornfully. *Ps.* lxxv. 4-5. 2. To establish in power. *Luke* i, 69.

**ft up the voice.** [Biblical] To cry loudly; call out. *Gen.* xxi, 16.

The Pope has addressed a letter to the German and Austrian bishops, in which he *lifts up his voice* on high and denounces duelling

*Review of Reviews* Nov., 1891.

**ght by, to set no.** To discount the worth of; undervalue.

**light-fingered.** Thievish; addicted to stealing, as pickpockets.

There are . . . yokels looking up at the tinselled dancers, . . . while the *light-fingered* folk are operating upon their pockets behind

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair, Before the Curtain* p. 5.

**light of, make.** To treat as of little or no consequence.

**light o' love.** A coquettish or wanton woman.

As there was a loyall Lucretia, so there was a *light o' love* Laïs

NASHE *Anat. of Absurditie*. I, 14.

**light out.** [U. S.] To decamp; abscond.

When the camp was asleep we *lit out* over the hills J. H. BEADLE *Western Wilds* 42.

**light, stand or sit in one's own.** To obstruct that which is to one's own advantage.

**light, to see the.** To come into notice; come into view; to be born; be published.

**light upon.** [Colloq.] To come upon by chance; to meet with or discover.

I called at Alrington and there *lit upon* a Quaker.

WESLEY *Works* I, 38.

**light-weight.** [U. S.] 1. One who is below the average mentally or morally. 2. *Sporting.* (1). An athlete, as a pugilist, over 126 and under 135 pounds in weight, stripped (2) [Brit.] A man or horse below the average weight.

**likely.** [U. S.] Good-looking; able-bodied.

**like that, to.** To signify one's disapproval of: usually with "well" and in the nominative, as, "Well, I *like that!*" An exclamation of derision.

**limb.** A leg or arm. In English of the Mid-Victorian period, the leg. "Now only [esp. U. S.] in mock-modest or prudish use." MURRAY *New Eng. Dict.*

I am not so particular as some people are, for I know those who always say *limb* of a piano or *limb* of a piano-forte

MARRYAT *American Diary*, I, 245.

"A bit of the wing, Roxy, or the—under *limb*?"

HOLMES *Elsie Venner* vii.

**limbo, n.** 1. An indefinite border-region in the intermediate state, nearer hell or heaven according to the class of souls there detained.

O, what a sympathy of woe is this,

As far from help as *Limbo* is from bliss

SHAKESPEARE *Titus Andronicus* act iii, sc. 1.

2. A place of confinement, a prison

I had mustered the scoundrelly dragoons ten minutes ago in order to beat up Burley's quarters and get you out of *limbo*

SCOTT *Old Mortality* p. 230.

3. A place, real or imaginary, to which things worthless or foolish may be relegated. The piece ran for eleven nights before descending into the *limbo* of oblivion

J. KNIGHT *Garrick* ix, 164.

—**limbo of fools.** A fools' paradise —**limbo of infants.** The dwelling-place of the departed souls of unbaptized infants —**limbo of the fathers.** A limbo near heaven where the souls of the pre-Christian saints were supposed to be retained until Christ's descent into Hades

**limb of the law.** A lawyer, or any officer of the law.

A *limb of the law* who had hitherto taken us under his protection.

MALKIN'S transl. of LE SAGE'S *Gil Blas*.

**line.** 1. A calling; profession; also, a specific class of goods stocked, manufactured, or sold.

The man in the shop, perhaps is in the baked "jummy" *line*, or the firewood and hearthstone *line*, or any other *line* which requires a floating capital of eighteen-pence or thereabouts

DICKENS *Sketches by Boz* 41.

2. *pl.* (1) A marriage certificate.

'How should a child like you know the marriage was irregular?' 'Because I had no *lines*,' cries Caroline  
THACKERAY *Philip* XII.

(2) Reins, ribbons — **all along the line**. Over the entire course, hence, at every point, in every particular

The campaign of 378 opened auspiciously for the interests of Rome *all along the line*.  
HODGKIN *Italy and Invaders* I 117.

— **hard lines**. [Brit.] A difficult or distressing condition, bad luck, ill fortune.  
The old seaman paused a moment "It's *hard lines* for me," he said, "to leave your honor in tribulation"  
SCOTT *Redgauntlet* III.

— **the lines fallen in pleasant places**. Favored by fortune, happily situated;  
The *lines* are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage  
Psalm XVI, 6.

— **the line of beauty, the line of grace**. See quotation

The *line of beauty* being composed of two curves contrasted, becomes still more ornamental. For as . . . as there is but one that truly deserves the name of the *line of beauty*, so there is only one precise serpentine-line that I call the *line of grace*  
HOGARTH *Analysis of Beauty* vii, 38, and x, 52.

— **to get one in or into line**. To persuade to adopt the same course as others; to secure the general agreement of a party, as of friends — **to line one's pockets**. To take money, to feather one's nest — **to line one's stomach**. To eat or drink — **to read between the lines**. To perceive or infer what is not expressed, as a hidden, different, or real meaning

No writer was ever more *read between the lines* J MARTINEAU *Essays* I, 118.

— **to ride the line**. [U S] To round-up a herd of cattle to drive in the strays

Those who do not have to look up stray horses, and who are not forced to *ride the line*  
THEODORE ROOSEVELT in *The Century* March, 1888.

**lingo**. Language such as is not easily understood owing to defective utterance; unintelligible speech, as a foreign language.

I shall understand your *lingo* one of these days, Cousin, in the mean while I must answer in plain English  
CONGREVE *Way of the World* act iv, sc. 3.

**Lingua Franca**. A mixture of Italian with Arabic, Turkish, Greek, etc., used between the inhabitants of western Europe and the Orientals. Or, any similar mixture, as the pidgin-English of the Chinese, or the Chinook of Oregon; a jargon.

'What do you want?' he asked in *Lingua Franca*, that undefined mixture of Italian, French, Greek and Spanish, which is spoken throughout the Mediterranean

BURNABY *Through Asia Minor* VI, 34.

**linked sweetness long drawn out**. An enduring pleasure of the senses, such as is supplied by melody.

And ever against eating cares,  
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,  
Married to immortal verse,  
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,  
In notes with many a winding bout  
Of *linked sweetness, long drawn out*

MILTON *L'Allegro* l. 135.

**lion or great lion**. One who has an attractive personality: a use said to have been derived from the lions formerly kept on public exhibition at the Tower of London. The menagerie was abolished in 1834. Hence, a prominent person or one eminent for notable achievement

Fops of all kinds, to see the *Lion* run,  
The beauties stay till the first act's begun

LADY M. W. MONTAGU *Town Eclogues, Tuesday*.

What is a *lion*? A *lion* is a man or woman one must have at one's parties

THACKERAY *Contrib to Punch*, Works, XXIV, p. 251.

**Lion** is used also euphemistically and idiomatically in several phrases — **a lion in the path or way**. A danger in one's path, especially, a fancied danger. See *Proverbs* xxvi, 13 — **British Lion**. — Great Britain symbolized, as the lion is the national emblem.

—**Cotswold lion**. A sheep — **Essex or Rumford lion**. A calf — **in the lion's jaws or mouth**. In a place of great peril — **in the lion's paws**. Within the power of (the one spoken of) — **in the lion's skin**. Not so dangerous as it seems, in disguise: in allusion to the fable of the ass that disguised itself with the skin of the lion.

*Clad in a lion's shaggy hide*

An ass spread terror far and wide

LA FONTAINE *Fables* p. 340.

—**the lion's share**. The largest portion of anything — **to have seen the lions**. To be world wise — **to see or show the lions**. To view or point out the sights as of a town, see noteworthy persons, places or things — **to twist the lion's tail**. To oppose or antagonize, insult or encroach on usually applied to the lion as emblematic of British rule

**lioness**. A woman of note; a feminine celebrity. See **LION**.

Mr Tupman was doing the honors of the lobster salad to several *lionesses*

DICKENS *Pickwick* XV.

**lip**. Impudent or saucy speech — **to carry or keep a stiff upper lip**.

To keep up one's courage — **to hang on one's lip**. To listen attentively; to give rapt attention to — **to make a lip**. To assume a sullen or mocking expression; to pout

Was not that a speech to provoke Miss Grizzle herself? However, I only *made up a saucy lip*

MADAME D'ARBLAY *Diary* Sept. 14, 1781.

—**to smack one's lips**. To separate the lips with a noise, especially as a mark of relish in eating or tasting

Trotty took a little beer and *smacked his lips*

DICKENS *Christmas Stories* *The Chimes*.

**Little Englander**. [Brit. Pol.] An anti-Imperialist; one opposed to the spread of British influence.

**live** occurs in the following idiomatic phrases:—**to live at rack and manger**. To live luxuriously at the expense of some one else — **to live down**. To live in such manner as to disprove, as a calumny, or efface, as a fault

—**to live fast**. To indulge continuously in dissipation — **to live high**. To indulge in rich foods — **to live in a glass-house**. To expose oneself to criticism for doing what one condemns in another — **to live out**. 1. [U. S.] To go out to service, as a hired girl or man 2. To live or exist to the end of — **to live up to**. To live in accordance with, or in a manner commensurate with as, *to live up to* one's income or promises — **to live with the hounds**. To ride close to the hounds in hunting; hold the hounds' pace — **to live within oneself**. To be wrapped up in one's own interests

**live wire**. [U. S.] A person full of energy, push, and vigor: in allusion to a wire charged with electric current.

**loaf**. [U. S.] To idle, lounge, shirk, soldier.

**loafer**. One who loafs, an idler

**loaves and fishes**. [Biblical] Personal gain or advantage; in religion, temporal benefits in allusion to the miraculous distribution of loaves and fishes by Christ (*John* vi, 26); in politics, official appointments or opportunities for pecuniary gain.

Their seducers have wished war

for the loaves and fishes which arise out of war

experiences

THOMAS JEFFERSON *Writings* vol. IV, p. 300 (1859).

**lobby**. [U. S.] To attempt to influence the members of a legislative body for or against an impending measure, as by bribes or corruption. As a substantive used also to designate the persons in such work — **lobbyist**. One who lobbies

A certain number of agents, selected for their skill and experience in the arts of deluding, persuading and bribing members, are employed by public companies and private individuals who have bills before the legislature which they are anxious to get passed. These persons attend the *lobby* of the House daily, talk with the members, invite them to dinners and suppers, etc.

BUCKINGHAM *America* II, 421.

**loblolly.** 1. A lubber, a fool, a lout. 2. [Naut.] Water gruel, spoon meat.

My ingenious countrymen have no taste now for the highly seasoned comedies; and I am sure that I have none for the pop and *loblolly* of our present writers

GARRICK *Peep Behind the Curtain* act 1, sc 1.

**lobscouse.** [Naut.] Meat and vegetable hash, an oho, gallimaufry. A glorified Irish stew, or perhaps what yachtsmen call *lobscouse*

F. F. MOORE *Journalists Note Book*

The cook had just made for us a mess of hot *scouse*—that is, biscuit pounded fine, salt beef cut into small pieces, and a few potatoes, boiled up together and seasoned with pepper

R. H. DANA *Two Years Before the Mast* V

**lobster.** 1. A British soldier, originally so called from the nickname given to a body of cavalry of the Parliamentary Army who during the Civil War wore lobster-like cuirasses, but later from the red coat of the uniform worn by certain infantry regiments. Called also **boiled lobster**. Formerly a **raw or unboiled lobster** was a sailor, and a **boiled lobster** a soldier

You must lead the soldiers to the very door And where am I to meet the *lobsters*?  
BUCKSTONE *Green Bushes* act 1, sc 2

2. [U. S.] One who can be easily deceived or imposed upon; a stupid or clumsy person, bore used contemptuously or as a term of reproach

**local option.** The privilege of determining whether the sale of intoxicating liquors shall be permitted in a certain region, district, or town. The phrase was coined by William Ewart Gladstone, *Letter*, Oct. 9, 1869. See *Notes and Queries* 10 Ser. vi, 467, viii 50, 195

**lock the stable-door after the horse is stolen.** To take precautions after the harm or mischief has been done.

**Locofoco.** [U. S. Pol.] A name first given to a faction of New York Democrats in 1834, but later adopted by the Whigs for Democrats in general, and in use up to the War of the Secession

Democrats of New York one night held a meeting in Tammany Hall. In this meeting there were opposing factions. One of these, finding itself about to be outnumbered, hastily adjourned and extinguished the lights, the other as quickly brought in candles, ignited their *loco foco* matches, lit the candles, called the meeting to order, and proceeded to pass their measures. The Whigs dubbed the Democrats *Locofocos*

SHIELDS *Life of Prentiss* 300

**locum-tenens.** [L.] One who takes the place of another, especially, in England, the temporary substitute of a clergyman or physician.

**loggerhead.** A blockhead; a stupid fellow.

*Poins* Where hast thou been, Hal? *Prince* With three or four *loggerheads* amongst three or four score hogsheads. SHAKESPEARE *Henry IV*, act ii, sc 4.  
—to be at or come, fall, get or go to *loggerheads*. To disagree, quarrel or dispute, also, to come to blows

Having driven their carts against each other [they] quarrelled, and went to *loggerheads* on the spot

SMOLLETT *Peregrine Pickle* xxxix

**log-rolling.** [U. S.] The uniting of neighbors or others for the purpose of handling logs, either in lumbering or in clearing land. Hence, a joining together of persons, as politicians, to further mutually each other's schemes, also, mutual puffing as by reviewers in literary publications

The members [of Congress], each of whom has a bill to get through, or one of whom desires to prevent his railroad from being interfered with while the other wishes the tariff on an article which he manufactures kept up, makes a compact by which each aids the other. This is *log-rolling*

BRYCE *Am Commonwealth* vol ii, p 125

The system of *log rolling*, so dangerous to all honest legislation

COMMODORE R. F. SROCKTON to Daniel Webster, Aug. 19, 1831.

**loins, to gird up the.** See under GIRD.

**lollop.** [Brit.] To lounge around; loaf.

You are allowed, on pretence of sickness, to *lollop* at your ease, while your betters are kept at hard duty. *SMOLLETT Rod Random XXXIV.*

**Lombard Street to a China orange, etc.** [Brit.] Very long odds, when offered as wager, as Lombard Street, London, is in the heart of the financial center. Used figuratively in staking great wealth against something of trifling value.

**long bow, to draw the.** See under **BOW**.

**long chalk, by a.** See under **CHALK**.

**long drink.** A drink served in quantity, as a lemonade or squash, mint julep or a stem of beer, as distinguished from a **short drink**, as of strong spirits, bitters, or a liqueur.

**long-headed.** Shrewd, clever, far-seeing.

Ulysses was the type of *long-headedness*.

*LOWELL Study Windows 126.*

**Long (or Big) Knives.** White settlers in Virginia, so called by the Indians in allusion to the swords they carried.

**long run.** The whole course or series of events or vicissitudes; generally with *in*, as, **in the long run**, as the final outcome of any train of circumstances — **the long and the short of.** The sum and substance of.

**long sauce.** [U. S.] Beets, carrots, parsnips, etc., as distinguished from **short sauce**, the shorter vegetables.

The mystery of making apple sweetmeats, *long sauce* and pumpkin pies

*W. IRVING History of New York 1, 184*

**long sweetening.** [U. S.] Molasses and treacle as distinguished from **short sweetening** which is sugar.

Only cornbread, peas and sorghum were plentiful. The latter took the place of molasses, and at the same time known as *long sweetening*. *CLAIBORNE Old Virginia 201*

**long winded.** Verbose, protracted, diffuse, loquacious.

Sir Walter Scott said Lord Clarendon's style was a little *long-winded*.

*CLARK RUSSELL Book of Authors.*

**look** is used in the following idiomatic phrases. — **look about one.** To be watchful or observant, to take one's circumstances or position into consideration — **look after.** To take care of, supervise, give particular attention to; also, to consider, seek — **look a gift-horse in the mouth.** See under **GIFT** — **look alive or sharp.** [Colloq.] To be very watchful or careful, to hasten, be prompt and alert.

The captain ordered his man to *look sharp* that none but one of the ladies should have the place he had taken fronting the coach box. *STEELE Spectator No 132*

— **look blue.** To show signs of low spirits, disgust or disappointment.

Squire Brown *looks rather blue* at having to pay two pounds ten shillings for the posting expenses from Oxford. *T. HUGHES Tom Brown at Oxford*

— **look or speak daggers.** To express hatred or anger in men or words — **look down one's nose.** To look glum, to look blue — **look for a needle in a haystack.** To seek what it is impossible to find — **look forward.** To anticipate, to expect — **look in.** 1. A short call on. 2. A chance of success — **look (one) in the eyes or the face.** 1. To meet or face without shrinking. 2. To examine deliberately.

They have *looked each other between the eyes*, and there they found no fault.

*KIPLING Ballad of East and West 83*

— **lookout.** 1. A place for observation or the person set to watch. 2. A crow's nest on a foremast of a ship, or a cupola with glazed windows in the roof of a caboose-car, for displaying signal-lights and enabling the crew to watch the train. 3. Something to be looked out for or guarded against, as, it is your own *lookout*. 4. [U. S.] One who watches, in a gambling-house or other illegal resort, for the approach of the police.

— **look out.** Take care, be watchful.

You'd better *look out*. Melenda's in a rage.

*BESANT Children of Gibeon II, ix.*

—**her, his, your,** (etc.) **lookout.** The particular matter or thing that concerns one and is to be guarded against or watched for

The result would be that a less price would be got, but that is the vender's *lookout*.  
F NORTH *Law Times Report* lii, 51.

—**look over.** 1. To glance over hastily or superficially, as, *to look over* a manuscript.  
2. To examine with care, as accounts, property, etc. 3. To look above and beyond.

4. To overlook, forgive, pardon, ignore  
Let us just warn the man, and *look over* it this time. GISSING *Village Hampden* ii, 263.

—**look through colored spectacles,** etc. To view through the medium of one's preferences or prejudices —**look to.** 1. To hold responsible, as, *to look to* the indorser of a note for payment. 2. To attend to, as, *look to* her, she seems about to faint.

3. To regard expectingly or with inquiry and hope, turn to, as for help

Some *look to* legislation to lighten the burden of the laboring class

CHANNING *Works, Temperance* 103.

—**to look for a needle in a bushel of hay or in a haystack,** **to look for a pin's-head in a cart-load of hay.** To waste one's efforts on a futile or an impossible task.

—**to look up.** 1. To seek or seek out. 2. To improve, look more promising, as, business begins *to look up*

**loon, loun.** An idiot, lout, varlet, rogue.

Thou cream-faced loon

Where got'st thou that goose look?

SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* act v, sc 3

—**to play the loon.** To play the fool

**loose.** Lax, as in character, quality, principle, or conduct; careless; slovenly, slack, relaxed, wanton, dissolute.

She wanton!—Aldabella *loose*!—Then, then

Are the pure lilies black as soot within

H II MILMAN *Fazio* act i, sc. 1.

—**loose-fish.** [Brit.] One who is given to dissipation, a dissolute character or "bad egg"

Our friend Clavering is about as *loose a fish* as any in my acquaintance.

THACKERAY *Pendennis* LXII.

—**loose one's purse-strings.** To give money generously —**on the loose.** Having given way to drink and dissipation, on a spree, also, on the town, wanton

Our friend prone to vices you never may see,

Though he goes *on the loose*, or the cut, or the spree. *Punch* xxxvii, 22.

**lop.** Same as LOLLOP.

Some debauched, idle fellow who lies and *lops* about all day, doing no work and earning no money

BESANT AND RICE *Chaplain of the Fleet* I, x

**lope.** A long easy canter or gallop

The Jap soldier doubles with the easy *lope* of a 'rickshaw coolie

KIPLING *From Sea to Sea* I, xx, 430.

**lord of creation.** Man as distinguished from woman an ironical use.

'Tis really a mighty silly thing for a *lord of the creation* to take up his residence in a boarding house . . . where there are pretty women

MRS A M BENNETT *Beggar Girl* II, x, 189.

**lord of misrule.** [Gt. Brit.] An officer of a royal or noble household who presided over the Christmas revels and ruled from All-hallow eve to Candlemas Day.

**lose heart.** To become discouraged or disappointed.

As soon as they were dead every one *lost Heart*, having lost their Chief Support.

BRANTÔME *Sp Rhodomontades* ORELL's trans., 186

**lose oneself.** 1. Become absorbed as in some problem or task; be abstracted. 2. Be bewildered or confused.

**lose one's heart.** To fall in love.

And have you *lost your heart*? . . . and are you married yet?

TENNYSON *Edw. Gray* 3.

**lose sight of.** 1. Forget, fail to keep in mind or take note of. 2. Fail to keep within the range of vision.

**lose the day.** To suffer defeat, as in a battle, contest, game.

—lose the number of one's mess. To die a seaman's term

**loss, at a.** 1. Confused; undetermined; perplexed, puzzled. 2. At so low a price as to result in a loss: said especially of goods sold.

**Lost Battalion.** A battalion of the Seventy-seventh Division of the United States National Army in the Meuse-Argonne offensive in the World War. See quotation.

There has certainly never been any hint of reproach in the popular expression, the *Lost Battalion*. People used it to convey rather an idea of endearment and admiration. The term has already so embedded itself in the minds and hearts of the people that a correction will not easily register at this late date.

*A Glorious Misnomer in The Sun New York, Dec 20, 1921, p 18, col 2*

**Lost Cause.** [U. S.] The cause of the Confederate States of America.

**lot.** [U. S.] A tract of land, plot.

This use of the word *lot* is, I believe, American only. The division of land in a township was made by *lot*, and the portion which fell to each individual was called his *lot*. Thus one [had] his *house* or *home-lot*, another his *plain-lot*, another his *mountain-lot*, etc. *T DWIGHT Travels in New Eng 1, 305-6*

**Lothario.** A gallant, rake, libertine from a character of this name in Rowe's drama "The Fair Penitent."

No woman could have been more flattered and courted by *Lotharios* and lady killers  
*BULWER Castles XVIII*

**loud.** Showy and vulgar in dress or manners.

Her own daughter had *loud* costumes

*QUIDA Moths XV*

**louisette.** The guillotine so called from Dr. Antoine *Louis* who invented it.

**love.** In some games, as tennis, nothing, no score, hence **love-all**, no score on either side.

We are not told how, or by what means *six love* comes to mean *six* to nothing.

—**cupboard love.** Interested love

*Gentlemen's Mag L 322*

*A cupboard love is seldom true,*

*A love sincere is found in few*

*Poor Robin 1688*

—**for love.** Without compensation, as, he printed the job for *love*! —**for love or money.** For any consideration —**in love.** Holding in tender affection a member of the opposite sex —**labor of love.** See under **LABOR** —**love in a cottage.** Marriage on inadequate income a euphemism.

Lady Clonbrony had not, for her own part, the slightest notion how anybody out of Bedlam could prefer, to a good house, a decent equipage, and a proper establishment, what is called *love in a cottage*.

*MARIA EDGEWORTH Absentee IV*

—**there is no love lost between them.** 1. They dislike each other. 2. They are dear to each other —**to make love.** To show affection for by amorous attentions.

**lovelock.** A curl falling by the ear, worn by gentlemen from the time of Elizabeth to that of Charles I. on the left side, and sometimes hanging to the girdle.

When men indulge in a curl in front of their ears, the *lovelock* is called a bell-rope, i. e., a rope to pull the belles after them.

*BREWER Phrase and Fable*

**low down.** Vulgar.

Her urchin speech was perhaps a shade better than the *low-down* language of  
Broad Run *EGGLESTON The Graysons XVIII*

**lubber.** 1. A hulking lout; a lumpish oaf. 2. Same as **LAND-LUBBER**.

**luck, fisherman's.** Wet, cold, hungry, and no fish.

**luck, in.** Enjoying a stroke of good fortune, fortunate.



**luck, out of.** Suffering from misfortune; without a chance.

**luck, to be down on one's.** See under DOWN.

**lug.** [Brit.] Pawn.—**in lug.** At the pawnbroker's, in pawn.

**lug in or into.** To drag into, to interpose, or introduce, as irrelevant matter in a conversation.

I want you to write me at once, saying what you know about the matter. I ask you, as I don't want to *lug in* any of the other people at Roper's

A TROLLOPE *Small House at Arlington*

**lugs.** [U. S. Slang.] A airs; affected pride, conceit.—**to put on lugs.**

To put on airs, be affected, conceited

Oh, we *put on lugs* now We wipe with napkins after eating

W N HARDEN *Abner Danrels* 259

**lummo, lummux.** [U. S.] A stupid, clumsy fellow.

Man in his original state is little more than a big *lummo* of a baby

DoW *Patent Sermons* IV, 149.

**lump in one's throat.** A sensation of choking or feeling of pressure in the throat, resulting from emotion.

**lump, in the.** As a whole; in its entirety.

**lump it.** To put up with as one may from necessity.

I'll buy clothes as I see fit, and if anybody don't like it, why they may *lump it*, that's all

MRS STOWE *Poganuc* p xi, 94

**lump sum.** A sum of money consisting of a number of small items or an amount embracing a number of small charges.

The rents of each place are entered in a *lump sum*

J T FOWLER in *Durham Acc. Rolls*

**lurch, leave in the.** To leave in a losing or embarrassing position: an expression derived from the method of scoring various games, beginning with a XVI century variation of backgammon called *lurch*.

Thus the greete Parasite of the soule that heretofore flattered this wretch with the paucity of his Sinnes, now takes him *in the lurch* and out-reckons him

T ADAMS *Black Devil* 74

**lurch, to lie at or upon the.** To be in ambush; lie in wait.

The enemy of human happiness, always *lying at lurch* to make prey of the young

J P KENNEDY *W Wirt*, I, v 68

**lush.** [Brit. Slang.] Alcoholic drink: so called from Lushington, a once noted London brewer.

The Bursar of Trinity shall be a proverb for a good fellow that loveth his *lush*

LEVER *Charles O'Malley* 11, 3

**Lushington.** [Brit. Slang.] A sot. See LUSH

**Lydford law.** [Brit.] A proverbial phrase meaning, to punish first and try afterwards (see JEDBURGH JUSTICE), originating from the name of a fortified town in Devon, where offenders against the statutory laws of Cornwall were held The dungeon was so wretched that confinement in it was severe punishment

I oft have heard of *Lydford Law*,

How in the morn they hang and draw,

And sit in judgment after

A *Devonshire Poet*

**Lynch law.** [U. S.] Mob law. The origin of this term has given rise to various speculations, one of which favors the claim that one Judge Charles Lynch (1736-1796), a patriotic Virginian, punished lawbreakers summarily, but it may have been derived from *linch*, open rising ground such as was used for a gallows-hill, or from a homonym meaning to thrash severely, beat, strike with knives, sticks or whips The term is current to this day in this sense in Ireland, Scotland, and the English counties of Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall Compare JEDBURGH JUSTICE and LYDFORD LAW.

**M**

**M.** The symbol for manslaughter formerly burnt on the brawn of the left thumb of one convicted of the crime.

—**M.** The symbol for the face of man in which the dots stand for the eyes being the equivalent of o's—omo (Latin, *homo*, man)

Who reads the name,

For man upon his forehead, there the *M*

Had traced most plainly

DANTE *Purgatory* xxiii

—**the five M's.** In Hindu asceticism *Mansa*, *Matsya*, *Madya*, *Maithuna*, and *Mudra*—flesh, fish, wine, women, and gesticulation—to carry or have an **M** under the **girdle**. To use *Mr* or *Mrs* as a respectful prefix when addressing or mentioning a person

Ye might hae had an *M* under your belt for Mistress Wilson of Milnwood

SCOTT *Old Mortality* XXIX.

**Macaroni.** An exquisite; a fop; dandy; dude. See quotations.

An exquisite of a class which arose in England about 1760 and consisted of young men who had travelled and affected the tastes and fashions prevalent in continental society

MURRAY *New English Dictionary*

A Maryland regiment noted for its smartness, which took part in the Revolution

FARMER AND HENLEY *Slang*, etc

Stuck a feather in his cap and called it *Macaroni*

Yankee Doodle

**machine.** 1. Any one of several mechanical appliances, as a bicycle, tricycle, motor-car, fire-engine or typewriter. 2. [U. S. Pol.] A party organization devoted to the boss or bosses.

The officials in whose gifts this patronage has place it at the disposal of the leaders of the *machine*. Now there are three *machines* in New York, two Democratic, because the Democratic Party is divided into two factions, and one Republican

BRUCE *American Commonwealth* II, III, lxvi, 498

**mad.** Angry; vexed.

And being exceedingly *mad* against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities

Acts xxvi, 11

**mad after.** Greatly inflatuated with.—to run **mad after.** 1. To pursue with eagerness or avidity, as a course. 2. To follow up with immoderate desire or from inordinate passion for.

Wee runne *madding after* Gold

FOTHERBY *Atheism* II, ii.

The world is running *mad after* force

DRYDEN *Cleomenes*. Preface

**mad as a hatter.** Very angry. Violently insane.

Sister Sall . . . walked out of the room, as *mad as a hatter*

HALIBURTON *Clockmaker* p. 109.

**mad as a March hare.** As mad as may be: in allusion to the antics of the hare during that month, its breeding season.

They are all, all *mad* I came from a world of mad women, *mad as March hares*.

FLETCHER *Wild Goose Chase* act iv, sc 3

**madcap.** A wild, reckless, impulsive young girl, or a young woman of lively temperament in early usage, a lunatic.

On the boards she was the merriest, gayest *madcap* in the world

MABEL COLLINS *Prettiest Woman* I

**mad, like.** As if mad; furiously; recklessly; as, to drive *like mad*.

Several Harlequins, and other ludicrous Forms that jumped and ran about *like mad*

RICHARDSON *Pamela* IV, 118

**mag**<sup>1</sup>. [Brit.] A halfpenny. Also, **meg**. Probably a contraction of *maggot*, a trifle.

It can't be worth a *mag* to him,

DICKENS *Bleak House* XXIII.

**mag<sup>2</sup>.** Chatter, jaw, talk. contraction of *magpie*.

"Don't be a fool, woman, and hold your *mag* on things you don't understand," said Mr. Simpson, coarsely  
E LYNN LINTON *Patricia Kemball* XVII.

**maggot.** [Brit.] A whim, fad, crochet

Not long ago, as all alone I lay upon my bed

'Twixt sleeping and waking this *maggot* came in my head

DURFEE *Pills to Purge* IV, 74

—**maggoty, maggot-headed** or **pated.** [Brit.] Eccentric, fanciful, full of whimsies

Be it observed that *maggoty* is a Cheshire provincialism for "crochety," like the expression used in other parts, 'a bee in the bottom'

J PICKFORD in *Notes and Queries* Sixth Series, V. 238

**magnum.** A double quart.

They had a *magnum* of claret at dinner at the club that day

THACKERAY *Pendennis* XXXI.

**magnum opus.** [L.] A great work: applied especially to an author's principal book.

**mahogany.** [Brit.] A dining table.—**to have one's feet or legs under the mahogany.** [Brit.] To be the guest of another, hence, to live at another's expense

I had hoped to have seen you three gentlemen with your legs under the *mahogany* in my humble parlor in the Marks.

DICKENS *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

**maid of all work.** A female servant who does the general work, or all the work of a household; in British usage, a *general servant*.

**maid of honor.** [Eng.] A cheese-cake. See quotation below.

Men of good reputation too,

At least regarded so by many,

Who sell—ye gods! it is too true—

A *maid of honor* for a penny

J M LACEY *Poems*

Anne Boleyn was observed by the King, seated on a dais with a silver dish of cheese-cakes or tartlets before her and honorable fellows. The King asked what they were eating. No one knew. Let them be called *Majds of Honor*, said the King and they were then called and are . . . so called to this day

J T BILLETT *The Majds of Honor Shop*, Richmond, Surrey

**maiden.** I. *a.* Of or pertaining to the first use or experience; initiatory; unused; unsullied; untried; as a *maiden* speech, a *maiden* trip. Said also of a plant never pruned, a field never plowed, a fortress never taken, etc. II. *n.* 1. [Sports] An over with no runs in cricket, a horse which has never raced. 2. A gullotine-like machine used to inflict capital punishment. It caused decapitation by the releasing of a loaded blade that, sliding between grooves in the frame, struck the neck of the victim severing the head from the body

**mailed fist, to show the.** To make an armed demonstration attributed to William II, German Emperor in a farewell speech to his brother Prince Henry of Prussia before sailing for the conquest of China in 1897.

**main, for or in the.** For the most part; in the greater part.

As long as they agree in the *main*, we need not be much moved with their petty dissensions

FULLER *Holy War* I, xvi, 28.

**main chance.** The direction in which success, advantage, or profit seems most readily attainable.

**majority, to go over to, or join the.** To die.

Life is the desert, life the solitude;

Death joins us to the great majority.

YOUNG *Revenge* iv, 1.

**make, in various senses, is used in the following idiomatic phrases.—**

**make a bag.** In hunting, to shoot a number of game.—**make account of.** To appreciate highly, esteem greatly —**make a book.** To accept bets as a bookmaker in betting especially in horse-racing —**make a dead set.** To endeavor

to influence by persistent efforts — **make a die of it**. [U S] To quit struggling against illness, die — **make a face**. To grimace — **make a figure**. See under **FIGURE** — **make after**. To hasten or follow after in an attempt to catch or detain — **make against**. To influence against, be unfavorable to — **make a hash, mess, muddle of**. To blunder in anything, make a failure of, hopelessly confuse (a business, an arrangement, etc.) — **make a hit**. See under **HIT** — **make a light**. [Austral] To see, to search for used by the aborigines — **make a (or one's) market of**. To use (a person) for personal gain, take an undue advantage of — **make an out**. In printing, to leave out a word or phrase in typesetting — **make a pass at**. To strike at, as with the fist used also metaphorically

Judge Sawbridge *made a pass* at him almost as soon as he was seated

BALDWIN *Flush Times* 161

— **make a person open his eyes**. To cause astonishment in one or amaze him — **make (or gain) a point**. To acquire a particular advantage — **make a poor mouth**. To plead poverty or ill health, whine — **make as if, or as tho** To act as if a pretended or supposed condition existed

Now, Mr. Feeblemind, when they were going out of the door, *made as if* he intended to linger

BUNYAN *Pilgrim's Progress*

— **make at**. To advance toward in order to attack, or as if to seize

All men *make at* the same common thing, Money STEELE *Spectator* No 450.

— **make a train, place, etc.** To arrive at, reach

*Church Usher* A stranger I was showing into a seat whispered that he wanted to be awakened at 11 30 sharp, as he had to *make a train*

*The Boston Transcript*, Aug., 1910

— **make away with**. 1. To kill 2. To carry off, remove 3. To squander — **make away with oneself** To commit suicide — **make believe**. To pretend

We will *make believe* that there are faeries in the world KINGSLEY *Water Babies* II

— **make better time**. To proceed or travel more rapidly, as, you will *make better time* by rail than by boat — **make bold**. To take the liberty, venture, muster up courage, as, *I make bold* to warn you of the risk you run — **make bricks without straw**. [Biblical] To attempt to achieve something without having the necessary material to succeed

And Pharaoh commanded Ye shall *no more give the people straw to make brick*, as heretofore let them go and gather straw for themselves

Exodus V, 7

— **make faces**. To indulge in grimacing — **make for** 1. To proceed or direct one's course toward 2 [U S] To tend to, aim at usually in a favorable sense, as, careful management *makes for* thrift. 3. To rush at, as, the infuriated brute *made for* the child — **make free with**. To use with undue freedom, take liberties with, as, the nephew *made free with* his uncle's money — **make friends**. To become reconciled after a quarrel — **make friends, or enemies**. To acquire or lose friends, used literally and figuratively

Get Posts, and Letters, and *make friends* with speed

SHAKESPEARE *II Henry IV*, act i, sc 1

He tried to *make as few enemies* as possible

MACAULAY *Hist Eng* VI, n, 97

— **make fun of**. To ridicule — **make good**. To realize or fulfil expectations, succeed, also, to keep a promise 2. To compensate by restoring or paying back, as money — **make head or headway**. To make progress, advance — **make it snappy**. Hurry up, be quick about it — **make land**. See under **LAND** — **make little**. See under **LITTLE** — **make meat**. [U S] To cure meat out of doors — **make merry**. To be jovial or joyful, feast

The people *made merry* with the Cardinal's ostentation

HUME *History England* II, 135

— **make much of**. 1. To treat with affection or esteem 2. To consider of great consequence, as, they *made much of* the discovery — **make nothing for**. To be of no value to, give no strength or help to — **make oath**. To swear formally to the truth of — **make of**. To reach as a conclusion, supply a reason for, as, none knew what to *make of* the transaction — **make off**. To run away, skip out, leave suddenly, escape said of persons, animals and ships — **make off with**. To get away with something in one's possession — **make one's compliments to**. To send one's greetings with ceremonious politeness — **make one's pile**. [U S] To amass money

The Treasury is bankrupt by continual demands for rebits, but the jobber has *made his pile*, and what does he care?

*The New York Tribune*, Dec., 1861

—**make one's soul.** To strive to save one from perdition.—**make one's way.**  
 1. To prove successful 2. To advance —**make or mar, make or break.** To cause the complete success or ruin of a person or thing

That Part of a Woman which either *makes all or marres all*, I meane her tongue

DAY *Festivals* VII, 206

—**make out.** 1. To obtain a clear understanding of, decipher; as an inscription.

2. To establish by evidence, as, a case

That in truth it was so, is *made out* by a variety of examples which the writings of Josephus furnish

PALEY *Evidences of Christianity* II, vi

3. To draw up or fill out in proper form, as legal papers or a report 4. To be successful

—**make over.** 1. To make anew, put into new form, as, to *make over* a gown.

We have taken from Europe . . . the most turbulent of her people, and have *made them over* into good citizens

LOWELL *Democracy* p 26

2. To transfer the title of, as, to *make over* an estate in trust or fee —**make place.** To give room (for) —**make play.** 1. To be sufficiently aggressive to keep an opponent busy as in boxing 2. To set the pace —**make prize of.** To capture and hold as a prize —**make ready.** To prepare a form for printing —**make sail.** 1. To set sail or start out 2. To spread more sail —**make shift.** To manage with what little one has —**make suit to.** To seek favor, address pleadingly —**make sure.** To be certain —**make sure of.** To secure or win positively — **make the best (or the most) of.** To use most advantageously or to the furthest extent —**make the pass.** [Slang] To exchange, as by dexterity, or in cheating, the top and bottom sections of a pack of cards.—**make the world away.** To pass away, die

Herein lives wisdom, beauty, and increase;

Without this, folly, age, and cold decay.

If all were minded so, the times should cease,

And three score years would *make the world away*.

She carv'd thee for her seal, and meant thereby

Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.

SHAKESPEARE *Sonnet xi*

—**make time.** [U. S.] To go swiftly —**make tracks.** [U. S.] To be off in a hurry.

He bounded from the room, and *made tracks* for the steamboat wharf

YALE *Lit Mag* XIV, 190.

—**make-up.** 1. To collect into a mass; gather together, as to *make up* a parcel.

2. To compose, as ingredients or parts, as, to *make up* a prescription 3. To supply a deficiency in; as, to *make up* an amount 4. To bring to a definite conclusion; settle; as, to *make up* one's mind 5. To make good, compensate for, as, to *make up* a loss.

6. To arrange for settlement, as, to *make up* a quarrel 7. To fabricate, as something deceitful or untrue, as, to *make up* a story 8. *Print* To arrange, as lines, into columns or pages 9. To enumerate, count 10 To rouge, powder, or prepare the face, costume, etc., as an actor, to represent suitably a character

You are not yet fully *made up*, nor fit for visitation

MARRINGER *Very Woman* act 1, sc. 1.

An English idiom of wide meaning One may *make up* a parcel, a prescription, or a deficiency, *adjust* a quarrel, *compensate* a loss, *determine* a course to follow, or *concoct*, as a story, *lay out*, as type into a page, *prepare* one's face for the public, or *repair* a hedge The wide range of this idiom may be illustrated by the following domestic colloquy:

"May I ask if you have *made up your mind* to stay in?" asked the henpecked husband, after a tiff.

"No," replied the determined wife, "I have *made up my face* to go out "

FRANK H VIZETELLY *Mend Your Speech* p. 34

—**make up a lip.** To show discontent by pouting Also sometimes rendered

**make a lip.**—**make up for.** To supply by an equivalent, compensate

Southey *made up* in weight for what he lacked in measure DOWDEN *Southey* V, 132.

—**make-up man.** [U. S. Journalese] The editor who supervises the preparation of forms or pages for the press-room, also, the printer who, under his direction, actually places the type, cuts, etc., in the form —**make up to.** 1. To come near to 2. To make a show of affection or friendliness toward

Tom's *making up to* the widow.

SAMUEL LOVER *Handy Andy* II, 22.

—**make up with.** To be reconciled after a dispute, to become friends again.  
I beseech you . . . that you will endeavour to *make it up* with my aunt

FIELDING *Tom Jones* VII, v.

—**make water.** 1. To leak 2. To urinate —**make way.** 1. To progress. 2. To give room.

'*Make way for Liberty!*'—he cried,  
*Made way for Liberty, and died!*

MONTGOMERY *Make Way for Liberty* st. 1.

—**on the make.** Intent on making money or profit, striving for advantage

**makings.** Material for the forming of anything from a philosopher to a cigarette.

You've not the *makings* of a Parson in you, or a Liebnitz, either

ELIOT *Daniel Deronda* ii, 16.

**malt above the meal or wheat.** [Scottish.] Under the influence of drink.

When *the malt* begins to get *above the meal*, they are like to quarrel

SCOTT *Old Mortality* IV.

**malt, soft fire makes sweet.** Gentle actions bring more effective results than violence, a soft answer turneth away wrath.

**mammon.** [Biblical] The spirit of avarice; also, riches *Luke* xvi, 9.

*Mammon* of unrighteousness means the god whom the unrighteous worship—wealth

ROBERTSON *Sermons* Fourth Series, ser. xii, p. 792.

**man** is used in an almost unlimited number of combinations forming various idiomatic phrases as, **as a man:** From a merely human point of view —**as man to man.** Frankly, without disguise, unequivocally —**best man.** A groomsmen —**Banbury man.** See under BANBURY —**Black Man.** Satan, the devil —**economic man.** In economics, an imaginary person devoid of all consideration for the rights of others and devoted only to the attainment and enjoyment of wealth —**green man.** 1. A game-keeper formerly dressed in green 2. In old masques, a fantastically dressed and garlanded figure representing a savage 3. In the reign of James I of England, a man who set off fireworks —**inner man.** 1. The mind, soul 2. The stomach appetite in a humorous sense —**Java man.** An extinct animal found in Java. It resembled the human type more closely than any of the anthropoid apes. Of the parts found the remains of the skull indicated a probable brain-capacity of about 900 cubic centimeters, or two-thirds the average of the human skull, while the femur, 455 millimeters in length, showed by its shape that the animal walked erect —**man alive! or dear man!** An exclamation of astonishment or remonstrance

*Man alive!* you never made fifty pounds cash since you were calved

CHARLES READE.

—**man ape.** A hypothetical ape-like progenitor of man —**man-at-arms.** A soldier of medieval times —**man-bound.** Detained by shortness of crew, said of a ship —**man child.** A male child —**man-fashion.** [U S] After the manner of the male sex, like a man —**man Friday.** A person devoted to another, like Robinson Crusoe's servant of that name, a factotum

Count Von Rechberg, according to Lord Clarendon, was Prince Bismarck's *man Friday.*

*The Athenaeum* London, April 6, 1887

—**man-god.** One who is both divine and human —**man-handle.** 1. To handle roughly, maul, mistreat 2. To move by man-power without mechanical aids —**man-hater.** A person who hates mankind, a misanthrope, also, a hater of the male sex —**man higher up.** [U S] In politics, one who has plenary powers to govern a political organization or other body for the benefit of his party —**man-hunter.**

1. A slave-dealer a term of contempt 2. A brigand 3. A cannibal —**man in the moon.** [Brit.] In politics a person who bribes the electors

On or before election day a mysterious stranger descended on the town, and took up his abode in a retired chamber of a private inn. The word was sent round, and there repaired to his presence quietly, and one by one, those undecided electors who were reported to have an itching palm. In many boroughs this stranger was called the *man in the moon*, perhaps on account of silver lining to the voters' pockets which resulted from his hidden rays.

*The Daily Telegraph* London, Nov. 25, 1889.

1—**man in the street.** The average citizen, public opinion personified

I didn't come here at early dawn only to tell you what the *man in the street* says.

WHYTE MELVILLE *White Rose* xviii

—**man Jack.** A fellow, an individual used familiarly and sometimes humorously especially in the phrase, **every man-jack**; connoting each and all, every man without exception, all men. Sometimes also rendered **every jack man**.—**man milliner.** A man engaged in millinery or dealing in other articles of female costume.—**Man of Bath.** Ralph Allen (1694-1764), a wealthy philanthropist of Bath, England, from whom Fielding drew the character of Allworthy in *Tom Jones*, and to whom he dedicated *Amelia*.—**Man of Blood.** 1. King David 1 Sam xvi, 7 2. Charles I.; so called by the Puritans.—**Man of Blood and Iron.** Prince Otto von Bismarck so called from his having, in a speech delivered before the Budget Commission of the Prussian Diet, Sept. 30, 1862, expressed the opinion that blood and iron alone could settle the vital questions of the age.—**Man of Brass.** In mythology, Talos, a creature who traversed Crete thrice a year annoying and slaying travelers.—**Man of Chios.** Homer.—**Man of December.** Napoleon III., who in that month was elected President (1848), made his *coup d'état* (1851), and was proclaimed emperor (1852).—**Man of Destiny.** Napoleon I. so regarded by himself.—**man of God.** A prophet, ecclesiastic or religious teacher.—**man of his word.** A thoroughly trustworthy man; a man whose word is as good as his bond.—**man of Kent.** [Eng.] One born east of the Medway river, all other men of the county being called Kentishmen.—**man of letters.** One who makes a profession of writing; a literary man, an author or scholar.

Be not merely a *man of letters*! Let literature be an honorable augmentation to your arms, but not constitute the coat, or fill the escutcheon!

COLERIDGE *Works, Biographia Literaria* in Vol. III, 320

—**man of men.** One who excels all others (in some quality, as goodness).—**man of mold or mould.** A mortal.—**man of motley.** A jester, fool.—**Man of Ross.** John Kyrle of Ross, Herefordshire, a 17th-century philanthropist, immortalized by Pope.—**man of salt.** One who melts into tears or drops of salt

This would make a man a *man of salt*,

To use his eyes for garden waterpots

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act iv, sc. 6.

—**Man of Sedan.** Napoleon III. because he surrendered to William, King of Prussia, at Sedan, Sept. 2, 1870.—**Man of Sedition.** Jean Claude, an eloquent Protestant pastor, twice silenced for controversies with Bossuet and others over the edict of Nantes so called by Madame de Maintenon.—**Man of Silence.** Napoleon III. from his taciturnity.—**man of sin.** 1. A New Testament designation (*2 Thessa* ii, 3) applied to Antichrist 2. Oliver Cromwell.—**Man of Sorrows.** A name supposed to allude to the Messiah (*Is* lvi, 3), hence, Jesus Christ.—**man of Spy.** A man of the stone age, with cranial formation somewhat in advance of the Neanderthal man, two skeletons found at Spy in Belgium are believed to be examples of this type.—**man of straw.** 1. One put forward as an irresponsible tool or as a fraudulent surety, a dummy

If the defendant be a *man of straw*, who is to pay the costs, sir?

DICKENS *Pickwick* XXI.

2. A fictitious antagonist, or a false assumption sophistically demolished in argument. It is always Socrates and Crto, or Socrates and Prædus, . . . in fact Socrates and some *man of straw* or good humoured nine-pin set up to be bowled down as a matter of course.

DE QUINCEY *Style, Works* XI, 218

—**Man of the People.** [Eng.] Charles James Fox, English statesman and Secretary for Foreign Affairs, born 1749, died 1806.—**man of the world.** A man given to worldly habits or devoted to or conformed to worldly matters.

This gentleman . . . was what they call a *man of the world*; that is to say, a man who directs his conduct in this world as one, who being fully persuaded there is no other, is resolved to make the most of this

FIELDING *Tom Jones* XIV, viii.

A true, fashionable, unprincipled *man of the world*.

MADAME D'ARBLAY *Early Diary* II, 244.

—**man-of-war.** An armed ironclad vessel belonging to the navy of a nation.—**man-of-war bird.** A frigate-bird.—**Portuguese man-of-war.** A marine hydrozoan. See quotation

What the Seamen call a Caravel or *Portuguese man-of-war*, which seems to be . . . of a middle Nature between a Plant and an Animal.

SLOANE *Jamaica* i, 7.

It is so called because it displays a sail-like crest as it floats on the surface of the water

—**man of wax.** A model man, as one molded in wax  
*Lady Capulet.* The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.  
*Nurse.* A man, young lady! . . . such a man.  
As all the world—why, he's a *man of wax*.

SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* act i, sc. 3.

—**Man on Horseback.** General Ernest Boulanger, whose public appearances were usually made when mounted on horseback, hence, a military dictator —**man-power.**

1. The normal rate at which a man does mechanical work, about  $\frac{1}{10}$  horse-power

2. A mechanism by which the force of a man may be used in driving machinery —

**man-rope.** A rope serving as a hand railing, as at a gangway —**man-tiger.** A

lycanthrope or werewolf possessing the power of changing himself into a tiger —

**man-trap.** 1. A structure dangerous to human life, as a frail building; also, a

place of temptation, as a gambling-den 2. [Eng.] A contrivance formerly used to

catch trespassers on private grounds —**Neanderthal man.** A man regarded as

typical of a race of ancient cave-dwellers: so called from a skull found in a limestone

cave at Neanderthal, Prussia, in 1857 —**second man.** 1. The one next to the mas-

ter, captain, or head man in authority, as the mate of a New England fishing-vessel

2. A butler's chief assistant or head footman —**the grand man.** Humanity or man-

kind as a whole, also, heaven, a Swedenborgian and positivist conception —**the Grand**

**Old Man.** [Gt Brit.] William Ewart Gladstone —**the old man.** [Naut.] The

captain of a ship: so called by the crew —**the sick man of Europe.** Turkey or the

Turkish empire, as having chronic financial and political troubles and apparently

nearing dissolution: an epithet which the Czar Nicholas first applied in 1853. —**to a**

**man.** 1. Untiedly, unanimously 2. All, without exception —**white man.** [U S.]

An honest fellow, one of the right sort —**you'll be a man before your mother.** A

derisive retort, or a jocular expression used in encouragement to suggest that one will

succeed if one perseveres

You mind your business half as well as I mind mine, and *you'll be a man before your*

*mother yet.* H. KINGSLEY

**manner** is used idiomatically in the following phrases.—**after a manner.**

In some sort of way: usually implying carelessness.—**by any manner.**

Under any circumstances whatever —**by no manner.** In no possible way —**in a**

**manner.** To some degree, so to speak, as it were —**to the manner born.** Ac-

customed to from birth Frequently incorrectly cited to the *manor born*.

**many, too.** 1. A number too great. 2. [Colloq.] Too strong; too able;

too skilful; as, I was *too many* for him.—**one too many.** Some person

or thing not required; that which is in the way as when two is com-

pany and three a crowd.

When one is *one too many*, go get thee from the door.

SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* act. i, sc. 1.

**maple-face.** A face with many spots or blotches on it.

**Marathon race.** A contest held as a test of endurance and speed over a

course 26 miles 385 yards in length, in imitation of one run originally

during the new Olympic games at Athens, Greece, April, 1896 The name is derived

from the legendary run of Pheidippides, who is supposed to have run to Athens (the

above-mentioned distance) after the battle of Marathon, announced the victory, and

dropped dead in the agora

**marchioness.** [Brit.] A maid of all work; a general servant: from a

domestic servant of Sampson and Sally Brass, a character in Dickens's

"Old Curiosity Shop."

To develop into the unnaturally widened and unkempt hand of a *marchioness*.

JOHN STRANGE WINTER *Bootles' Baby* II.

**mare's nest.** A discovery that at first seems important, but turns out to

be a fraud or hoax.

Dr. Bilde and the rest discovered something wrong, and hoped for the worst, whereas

they've only found a *mare's nest*. JAMES PAYN *Thicker than Water* XLVII.



**mare, gray.** See under GRAY.

**margin.** In finance: (1) A sum of money, or its value in securities, deposited with a broker to protect him against loss in buying and selling or his principal, in transactions in stocks, grain, oil, etc. It is generally a fixed percentage on the market value of the stock or commodity affected by the transaction. (2) The excess of an investor's securities, whether cash or stocks, in the hands of his broker, over his liabilities. (3) A deposit by each of two brokers between whom there is a contract, when one is "called" by the other, the deposit lying subject only to joint draft while the contract endures on which the margin has been called.

**marine.** An empty bottle: so called from the idea formerly held by seamen that marine officers were useless at sea. Sometimes also rendered a **dead marine**.

—**tell that to or that will do for the marines.** Expressions of disbelief, referring to the supposed ignorance and credulity of the marines, as landsmen on shipboard.  
*Tell that to the marines—the sailors won't believe it.* SCOTT *Redgauntlet* XIII.

**mark.** A bound or limit; standard, also, rarely, the utmost limit or capacity; as, to go beyond the *mark*; the performance was not up to the *mark*.

"The story don't step <sup>up</sup> to the *mark*."

STOCKTON in *Century Mag.* Feb. 1890, p. 543.

—**beside the mark!** Out of place, inappropriate.

Both one and the other were *besides the mark*.

T STAFFORD *Pac. Hb* i, v.

—**God save or bless the mark.** An ejaculation to avert evil, also, used ironically, or to denote surprise, or scorn. Derived from a former practise among bowmen who used the phrase when they shot an arrow that hit the mark, in the hope that the mark would not be hit by another's arrow and thus disturb the first shot.

"God save the mark, that I should give the name of king to one of his kindred."

JAMES WOODMAN ii.

—**good mark.** [Austral.] A trustworthy person; especially an employer who treats his employees fairly and honestly.—**mark time.** [Military.] To move the feet as in marching, but without advancing, to beat time. Also, to await developments, as of plans.

The human mind accordingly, instead of marching, merely *marked time*.

MACAULAY *Essays*, Bacon.

—**to make one's mark.** 1. To make a cross or other character as a substitute for one's signature. 2. To become eminent or distinguished, gain a position of influence.

**marriage-bed.** The conjugal relation with its rights and duties.

**marriage, common-law.** Marriage by mutual consent as evidenced by the declarations, writings or conduct of the persons.

**marriage, left-hand.** See under LEFT HAND.

**marriage lines.** Marriage certificate from the officiating priest or magistrate.

**marriage, mixed.** A marriage between persons of different religions; specif., in the Roman Catholic Church, one between a Catholic and a non-Catholic Christian, which must be performed by a priest. Marriages between Catholics and non-Christians, or unbaptized persons, except under special dispensation, are null and void. 2. A marriage between persons of different nationalities or races.

**marriage of the Adriatic.** An ancient Venetian ceremony, in which the doge cast a consecrated ring into the sea on Ascension day from the state barge "Bucentaur," exclaiming "*Desponsamus te, Mare nostrum, in signum vere perpetuæ dominii*." (We wed thee, O sea of ours, in token of a true and perpetual sovereignty), thus indicating the subjection of the sea to Venice. The ceremony, in its earliest form, dated from the conquest of Dalmatia by the Doge Pietro Orseolo II. in 1000, and assumed its later and more magnificent form with the presentation of a ring to the Doge Sebastian Ziani by Pope Alexander III. in honor of the victory of

the republic over the imperial fleet in 1177, which gave Venice command of the Adriatic. FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dict.* p. 1518

**marrow.** Vigor; strength.

Now the time is flush

When crouching marrow, in the bearer strong,

Cries of itself, no more SHAKESPEARE *Timon of Athens* act v, sc 5.

—**marrow-bones.** [Humorous] One's knees —**marrow-bones and cleavers.** The musical instruments of the ancient and medieval Britain —**to bring down to one's marrow-bones.** To bring to a state of subjection

I only want to bring them to their marrowbones

G. MACDONALD *Elect. Lady* 108.

—**to ride in the marrow-bone coach.** To travel on foot, ride shanks's mare.

**marry.** An exclamation of surprize or asseveration, the equivalent of "Indeed!" "Forsooth!" A corruption of *Mary*, or *by Mary* (the Virgin).

*Marry*, quotha! I hope, in heaven, I have a greater portion of grace

CONGREVE *Old Bachelor* act i, sc 4.

Many affirmations and expressions of surprize found in medieval literature have *marry* as the first element, as, **marry a me, marry of me**, etc —**aye, marry.** Yes, indeed, verily, as, "*Aye marry!* but she's a beauty" —**marry come up** Hoity-toity, pshaw used as an exclamation of contemptuous surprize or indignation.

Shipslop departed, tossing her nose, and crying, "*Marry come up!* There are some people more jealous than I, I believe."

FIELDING *Joseph Andrews* IV, 1.

**marry over the broomstick, to.** See under BROOMSTICK. —**to marry with the left hand.** To marry morganatically.

**mascot.** One who or that which brings good luck. A word that gained favor through Edmond Audran's opera *La Mascotte*, performed in December, 1880, in which occur the following lines:

Ces envoyés du paradis,

Sont des *Mascottes*, mes amis,

Heureux celui que le ciel dote d'une *Mascotte*.

**mash.** [Yorks, Eng.] A person or thing admired used chiefly of articles of apparel. —**mashed on.** In love with. —**to make one's mash** or **to mash.** To devote oneself exclusively to as an admirer, or win the affection and admiration of, also, to flirt with or win the affection of (one of the other sex).

**masher.** 1. A fop or dandy, who poses as a fascinator of women. 2. One who persistently annoys unprotected women by endeavoring to scrape acquaintance with them, and by making other advances, as inviting them on motor-rides, ogling, sidling up to, etc., in public places or conveyances.

**Mason and Dixon Line.** [U. S. Pol.] The boundary line of Pennsylvania and Maryland, as surveyed by Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon in 1761-2.

This bill is an attempt to reduce the country south of *Mason and Dixon's line* to a state of worse than colonial bondage

JOHN RANDOLPH speech in Congress, April 15, 1824.

**masses, the.** The people in general, as distinguished from the *classes*; mankind in general. As opposed to the *classes*, said to have been first used by W. E. Gladstone in 1886.

**mass-meetings.** [U. S.] A public meeting attended by the people of a region or district.

No single constitution has ever been altered by means of a convention gotten up by mass-meetings

DANIEL WEBSTER in re *Luther vs. Borden*, 7 Howard 32.

**mast, before the.** In the forecabin, the seamen's quarters on a sailing

vessel.—to sail or serve before the mast. To act as a member of a crew, to serve as an ordinary seaman

And indeed, bad as his clothes were, and coarsely as he spoke, he had none of the appearance of a man who sailed before the mast. R. L. STEVENSON *Treasure Island* p 4

**Master, the.** Jesus Christ, so designated in the Christian church.—to be master of oneself. To have one's passions or emotions under control.—to be one's own master. To be free from the dominance or control of any one else.

**matter** occurs in several idiomatic phrases.—for that matter or for the matter of that. As far as the particular circumstance mentioned is concerned.—in the matter of. In regard to, concerning.—matter of course. Something expected to happen in the natural course of things

As for the certificate which Sir Henry Maine awarded us, we took it, I fear, very much as a matter of course *Nineteenth Century* 1887.

—matter of fact. Something that has actual and undemable existence or reality; or that is or may be proved by evidence

They did not receive, as a matter of fact, the good government which they desired.

BRYCE *American Commonwealth* II, lxii, 311.

**mauvaise honte.** [F.] Shamefacedness.

The *mauvaise honte* and artificial cynicism so constantly to be observed in the Anglo-Saxon L. W. M. LOCKHART *Mine is Thine*, XVII.

**maverick.** [Western U. S.] 1. An unbranded animal, particularly a calf: named from Samuel *Maverick*, a Texan cattle-raiser of about 1840, who refrained from branding his stock. 2. Something obtained dishonestly, by appropriating to one's own use, as unbranded cattle or unoccupied land.

**Maximalist.** The extreme section of the Russian Social Democratic Party. Synonymous with *Bolshevik*.

**mealy-mouthed.** Given to express facts or opinions in a milder manner than they justify; hesitating to tell the truth in plain terms; soft or insincere of speech

**mean.** Base; ignoble; hence, shabby, petty, disobliging; also, uncomfortable; uneasy.—feel mean. [U. S.] To be out of sorts or in poor health; also, to feel out of one's element.

**mean well.** Be kindly disposed to; have friendly intentions toward.

The projector of a new domestic medicine, meaning well by himself and the public. BEDDOES *Hygeia* II, 34.

**means** is used idiomatically in the following phrases.—by all means. Without hesitation; assuredly; certainly.—by no means. Certainly not; not at all.

**mean white.** [U. S.] Poor white trash. See quotation.

That despised and degraded class, the *mean whites*,—the creatures who had neither the social position nor the property that seemed essential to freedom in the South. JUSTIN MCCARTHY *Fair Saxon* XIX.

**measure** occurs in a few idiomatic phrases.—to have one's measure. To have formed a judgment of another's abilities, worth, etc.

Fletcher did not venture into that "holy of holies", there were too many men there who had got his measure N GOULD *Double Event* 215

—to measure one's length. To fall or be knocked or thrown down.—to measure strength with. To test the strength of or to determine by contest which of two persons is the stronger, hence, to engage in competition against or contest with.

—to measure swords. To compare swords, as before a duel, figuratively, to enter into rivalry

So we measured swords and parted.

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act v, sc. 4.

—to take one's measure. To estimate one's value or importance; size up.

Men take each other's measure, when they meet for the first time,—and every time they meet

EMERSON *Conduct of Life, Behavior* 150.

**meddling duchess.** A pompous, dictatorial dame who fusses about but does nothing.

**medicine-dance.** [U. S.] An Amerind tribal ceremony, performed by medicine-men, and sometimes in a **medicine-lodge**, a tepee expressly set apart for the use of medicine-men.

A religious ceremony formerly practised, by certain tribes, involving self torture, and meant to initiate the chosen candidates into the mysteries and powers of medicine-men

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary*.

**medicine-man.** [U. S.] An Amerind priest, physician, and magician; hence, a person of great occult influence.

The *medicine man* was the religious dignitary, his influence over the tribes being that of fear rather than of awe and spiritual dignity. CHARLES MORRIS *Aryan Race* p 164.

**medicine, to mix good, or bad.** [U. S.] To plan to do good or evil to some one or something: from the Amerind tribal custom of incantations by a medicine man.

**medicine, to take one's.** 1. [Brit.] To take a drink. 2. [U. S.] To take or suffer one's just punishment. 3. To undergo a prescribed treatment or experience, as in initiation into the mysteries of a tribe by a medicine-man.

The young Indian thenceforth wears about his person the object revealed in his dream, or some portion of it This in the modern language of the forests and prairie is known as his *medicine*

FRANCIS PARKMAN *Jesuits in North America* 71.

**meet** is used idiomatically in the following phrases.—**meet half-way.**

To compromise; make mutual concession; hence, to yield; concede.

The world *meets* nobody *halfway* LAMB *Essays, St Valentine's Day*.

—to meet the ear. To be heard, as, a deeper meaning than that which *meets the ear* —to meet the eye. To be seen —to meet up with. [Southern U S] To come up with, overtake —to meet with. 1. To join in company 2. To chance on, find, hence, to experience, encounter, or be subjected to 3. To oppose, engage, encounter 4. To obviate, remove a Latinism 5. [Scot] To pay a debt, fulfil an obligation —well met. An expression of greeting, welcome opposed to *ill met*, as used by Shakespeare Extended sometimes to fellow well met or hail fellow well met.

The best fellow-well-met in the world

W J FITZPATRICK *Life of T N. Burke* I, 308.

**megrim.** A whim; fancy; crotchety.

How you ramble, sirrah! What *megrim*s you have in your head

CUMBERLAND *The Jew* act ii, sc. 2.

**mellow.** Partly intoxicated.

Had been the favourite of full many a mess

Of men, and made them speeches when half *mellow*

BYRON *Don Juan* iii, 82.

**member.** [Brit.] A person: used generally with a qualifying term, as *hot, rum, warm*, etc., meaning irascible, peculiar, ardent.

**memento mori.** [L.] Literally, remember you must die: specifically a reminder of death, as a skull, etc.

A great man must keep his hair at his feast like a living *memento mori*

THACKERAY *Pendennis* ii, 226.

**mend one's fences.** See under FENCES.

**Menshevik.** The minority party among the Russian revolutionists, and as such opposed to the **BOLSHEVIKI**.

**merry.** Delightful or pleasant in conditions or aspects: the original sense.—**make merry.** See under **MAKE**.—**Merry England.** England in the pleasant and palmy days.

Saint George of *merry England*, the sign of victorie. SPENSER *Faerie Queene* I, x, 61

Perthshire contains . . . tracts, which may vie with the richness of *merry England* herself. SCOTT *Fair Maid of Perth* 1

**merry-andrew.** A clown or buffoon; specif., a jester in attendance on a traveling quack.

Th' Italian *Merry Andrews* took their place,  
And quite debauch'd the Stage with lewd grimace

DRYDEN *Epl. to Univ. of Oxford* ii. (1673).

**merry-thought.** The furcula or forked bone of a fowl's breast; the wish-bone.

I have seen a man in love grow pale, and lose his appetite, upon the plucking of a *merry-thought* ADDISON *The Spectator* No. 7, p. 2, (1711).

Slumpering old maids cracked *merry thoughts* with gay bachelors

LEVER *Jack Hinton* ii.

**Mesopotamia ring, the true.** Something that sounds well and pleases but means nothing: in allusion to the old woman who told her pastor that she found great support in "that blessed word *Mesopotamia*."

**mess<sup>1</sup>.** A number of persons who eat at the same table at the same time, especially in the army or navy; hence, to **lose the number of one's mess**, to die.

I have an idea that some of us will *lose the number of our mess*

MARRYAT *Peter Simple* XXXIII.

**mess<sup>2</sup>.** A situation of embarrassment or confusion; a muddle; fiasco; failure; hence, to **make a mess of it**. To fail utterly.

I am glad that I passed over the whole subject in the "Origin," for I should have made a pretty *mess of it*.

DARWIN *Life and Letters* II, 392.

**metizo.** The offspring of a Spaniard or Portuguese and an American Indian. A Spanish word meaning hybrid.

**metiff.** The offspring of a white and a quadroon; an octoroon.

**metis.** [F.] Any one of mixed blood; a mulatto.

**me'um.** [L.] Mine; belonging to me: used in the phrase **meum and tuum**. Mine and thine: designating property; as, he does not distinguish between the *meum* and *tuum*: a polite euphemism for a thief.

The distinction between *meum* and *tuum* having been temporarily overlooked.

MALONEY *Forestry West Africa* 82.

**micning malicho.** Villainy done by stealth; mischief worked in secret.

The Spanish *malheco* is interpreted "malicious death," and in English *micning*, from *miche*, is "the act of shrinking from view; skulking," thence we have "a malicious act done by stealth"

Marry, this is *micning malicho*; it means mischief

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act iii, sc 2

It seems agreed, that this word, *malicho*, is corrupted from the Spanish *malhecor*, which signifies poisoner, and this certainly is very suitable to the dumb-show preceding, in which the poisoner of the King is represented. . . By *micning malicho* he [Hamlet] means "a skulking poisoner"

NARES *Glossary*

Because the readings in the First Folio edition and the Quarto edition of Shakespeare's plays differ, the first being *micning malicho* and the second *munching malicho* the suggestion is offered that the Spanish *mucho malhecho*, "much malice," was meant.

**middle class.** The people conventionally or socially between the aristocracy and the poorer people: a vast community of well born men and women The distinction drawn in Great Britain was expressly denied in America

by the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776 "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal," etc

It is to the *middle class* we must look for the safety of England

THACKERAY *Four Georges, George III.*

**middleman.** A trader who purchases merchandise in bulk to sell it to other traders or, in smaller quantities, at an increased profit, to retailers.

The *middleman system* is the one crying evil of the day

MAYHEW *London Labour* ii, 373

**middling gossip.** A go-between.

**midsummer madness.** Violent madness: from a former belief that lunacy prevailed at this time. Also rendered *midsummer moon*. See next entry.—**it's midsummer moon with you.** You are stark mad.

What's this? *midsummer-moon!*

Is all the world gone a-mad? DRYDEN *Amphitryon* IV, i.

—**to have but a mile to midsummer.** To be somewhat mad

**miff.** A tantrum, petty quarrel, also, adjectively, angry.

When a little quarrel, or *miff*, as it is vulgarly called, arose between them

FIELDING *Tom Jones* III, vi

But being *miff* with him myself, I would not plead against him in the least particular

W. TAYLOR in letter to Southey in *Robberd's Memoir* I, 447

—**miffed.** Angry, offended, vexed — **to be miffed.** To be displeased, annoyed or peevish

**might and main.** Vigorous power or effort; full strength; strenuously: used adverbially in the phrase **with might and main.** With utmost endeavor; with one's whole strength.

The main part is to do *with might and main* what you can

EMERSON *Conduct of Life* iii, 56

**milk** is used with various meanings in the following phrases:—**milk-and-water.** Weak and vacillating; namby-pamby; as, a *milk-and-water* political policy

All their pretty *milk and water* ways

BYRON *Don Juan* VIII, x

—**milk in the cocoanut.** See under COCOANUT — **milk of human kindness.** Sympathy for another, compassion characteristic of humane persons.

Yet do I fear thy nature,

It is too full 'o' the *milk of human kindness*

To catch the nearest way SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* act i, sc. 5.

—**to cry over spilt milk.** To indulge in vain regrets, bewailsome condition that can not be altered

It's no use *sighing over spilt milk*

TROLLOPE *Castle Richmond* I, 113.

—**to milk the street.** [U S Fin] To raise and depress prices, as of stocks, to get a profit out of small traders.

**milksop.** A spiritless or effeminate man or youth; one wanting courage or manliness.

**Milky Way.** An irregular luminous band encircling the heavens consisting of numberless stars too small to be seen separately by the naked eye. It is called also the *Galaxy*.

**mill.** A pugilistic contest or boxing bout.

A champion was picked out on either side tacitly, who settled the matter by a good hearty *mill*

HUGHES *Tom Brown's School Days* II, v.

**mill, to bring or take grist to the.** See under GRIST.

**mill, to go or pass through the.** To acquire a thorough knowledge of by severe training, experience, discipline.

Certain persons who have *gone through the mill* of what is known as higher education.

*Contemp Review* LI, 10.

**mill, to put through the.** To try out or test, as a horse before a race.  
**millers, to drown the.** See under DROWN.

**millstone around one's neck, to hang a.** To assume responsibilities; to take a burden on oneself.

**millstone, to see into or through a.** To show great penetration.

**millstones, his eyes drop.** He is an unfeeling, hard-hearted person.

*Your eyes drop Mill-stones, when Fooles eyes fall Teares.*

SHAKESPEARE *Richard III* act i, sc. 3.

**mince matters.** To affect extreme delicacy in discussing things.

A man's speculative view depends—not to *mince the matter*—on the state of his secretions.

W. COLLINS *Dead Secret* II, 49.

**mince-meat, to make.** To chop or cut anything into small bits, as in making mince-meat; to demolish; destroy.

Macaulay *makes . . . mince-meat* of Southey's . . . exposition of political economy.

L. STEPHEN *Stud Blog* IV, 76

**mind** used in varying senses occurs in a number of phrases:—**after**

**one's mind.** To one's liking.—**a month's mind.** 1. The monthly commemoration, usually the first, of a person's death. 2. See under MONTH —**a year's mind.** A solemn anniversary service for the dead —**in my mind.** In my opinion.

—**in or of two, several, or many minds.** Subject to conflicting desires or motives, uncertain what to do —**mind cure.** A method of healing based upon the assumption that bodily diseases are due to abnormal conditions of mind, and can be cured by putting the sick person into a normal mental condition through the direct action of the mind of the healer upon the mind of the sick —**mind-day, n.** The day on which a year's mind is celebrated —**mind-healing.** Same as MIND-CURE —**mind-science.**

The true conception of being, whereby are discerned man's nature and existence; Christian science —**mind-sick.** Having a deranged mind —**mind-transference.**

The conveyance of thought by telepathy —**mind your eye.** Take care!

"Perhaps it may be so," says I, "but *mind your eye*, and take care you don't put your foot in it."

HALIBURTON

—**mind your own business.** Concern yourself with only those affairs that belong to you; do not interfere with anything that does not concern you —**never mind.** Pay no further attention to, do not concern yourself about or with —**of one mind.** In agreement —**of sound mind.** Sane —**on one's mind.** In one's thoughts: implying care or anxiety —**out of mind.** Forgotten —**to be in a state of mind.** To be agitated, perplexed, or harassed —**to be in one's right mind.** To be sane —**to be of a mind.** To have an opinion —**to be of (another person's) mind.** To have the same opinion —**to be out of one's mind.** To be insane —**to give one's mind to.** To exert one's powers toward, do one's best to accomplish —**to have a mind, or a good mind, or a great mind.** To feel disposed or powerfully disposed —**to have half a mind.** To feel inclined —**to have in mind.** To have under consideration; recall —**to have little or no mind.** To be slightly or not at all disposed or inclined: followed by an infinitive —**to keep in mind.** To remember, keep one's attention on —**to know one's or one's own mind.** To adhere without vacillating to one's opinion or plan of action —**to let a person know one's mind.** To express one's opinion —**to lose one's mind.** To become insane —**to make up one's mind.** To determine definitely, as after careful consideration and deliberation —**to mind one's book.** To study diligently —**to mind one's p's and q's.** To be accurate or precise: a phrase variously explained; perhaps an allusion to the supposed care in distinguishing the letters —**to put in mind.** To remind —**to tell or say one's mind.** To express one's opinion freely.—**with one mind.** Unanimously; of one mind

**Minimalists.** The moderate section of the Russian Social Democratic Party: synonymous with *Mensheviks*.

**mint.** A vast supply or source of anything: used especially of money.

He must have lost a *mint* of money.

MARRYAT *Peter Simple*, I.

**minikin.** 1. A dainty or sprightly lass; also a pert, smirking wench.

2. A fiddle-string; also, a fiddle.

His Lordship was no good Musician, for he would peg the *minskin* so high, till it crack'd  
HACKET *Archbishop Williams* I, 147

—tickle the *minikin*. To play the lute or fiddle

When I was a young man and could tickle the *Minskin* I had the best stroke, the sweetest touch, but now . . . I am false from the Fiddle and betook me to thee [the pipes]  
MARSTON *Pasquil* I, 14.

**minute-jack.** A fickle-minded man; one who momentarily changes his mind.

Cap and knee slaves, vapours and *minute jacks*!

SHAKESPEARE *Timon of Athens* act iii, sc. 6.

**minute-man.** A man ready for service at a minute's notice.

The election of Lincoln has created a profound sensation all through the South.

*Minute men* are forming in several of the slave States

*The Richmond Inquirer* Nov. 13, 1860

(1) A militiaman in the American Revolution who was supposed to be armed and ready for action at a minute's notice The Massachusetts Provincial Congress voted (Nov 23, 1774) to enroll 12,000 of them as militia (2) [U S] A fireman stationed outside of an engine-house and employed at any occupation, but subject to call in case of fire

**minx.** 1. A forward, saucy girl; a hussy: frequently in playful allusion. Probably a corruption of *minikin*, used as a term of endearment to a girl 2. A wanton — **Mistress Minx.** A selfish, extravagant woman

*Mistrix Minx*, a Marchant's wife, that wil eat no Cherries forsooth, but when they are at twenty shillings a pound.

NASHE *Pierce Pennilesse* 10b (1592)

**mischief.** With the definite article, *the mischief*, used idiomatically to emphasize the most annoying feature of an occurrence.

And faith, 'tis pleasant till 'tis past.

*The mischief* is that 'twill not last.

A E HOUSMAN *Shropshire Lad* lxii.

—go to mischief! Go away! Get out! Used as an expletive.—to play the mischief. To inflict damage

This unlucky characteristic *played the mischief* with him in one of his love affairs.

IRVING *Salamagundy's Papers* 124.

—what, who, or where the mischief. What, who, or where the dickens, deuce or the devil.

Gunga Din, You 'eathen,  
Where the mischief have you been

KIPLING *Barrack Room Ballads*.

**misery.** 1. A pain or ache.

[She always had the *misery* in her head along of all the wind the spinning-wheels made

FISON *Merry Suffolk* 35

Massa, I have such a *misery* in my back.

LATHAM *Black and White*, 38.

2. A place of confinement.

She would gladly have confined us both in the Bastile, had England such a *misery*.

MADAME D'ARBLAY *Diary* V, 181 (1790).

**miss is as good as a mile.** A narrow escape is as real as any other. Originally "An inch in a miss is as good as an ell," indicating that a failure to hit one's objective by a short distance is as much of a failure as if it be missed by a greater distance

However, a *miss is as good as a mile*—a saying which sailors very often have occasion to use.

[R H DANA *Two Years Before the Mast*.

**missing link.** Something lacking to complete a chain or series. Haeckel held the *Pithecanthropus erectus* to be the intermediate form connecting primitive man with the anthropoid apes.

The exhibition at the Westminster Aquarium of the *Missing Link*, or . . . the Human Monkey

T TYLER in *Time* VIII, 476 (1883)



**miss one's cue.** To fail to respond at the proper time; to miss an opportunity: a phrase borrowed from the theater. Compare **cue**.

**miss stays.** [Naut.] To fail to go on the opposite tack after the helm has been put down: said of a sailing vessel. Hence, to make a failure of. I reckon I've *missed stays!* . . . I'm for my long home and no mistake

STEVENSON *Treasure Island* XXVI.

**Missouri: I'm from Missouri; you've got to show me.** [U. S.] I am in doubt until proof is supplied; hence, I am on the alert against deception: first used by W. D. Vandiver, Representative from Missouri in Congress, and in consequence the State has become known to some extent as the "Show me" State

Colonel Vandiver admits that he may have invented the phrase, and is willing to stand sponsor for it until some "more ambitious scribbler" can prove a prior claim. Colonel Vandiver, at least, was the means by which the expression gained nationwide and even world-wide currency

*The Literary Digest* Jan. 28, 1922, p. 42.

About 1897 or 1898, while a member of the *Kansas City Times* staff, I was in Denver, Colorado, and overheard a clerk in one of the hotels refer to a green bellhop, who had just taken a guest to the wrong room, in this language: "*He's from Missouri. Some of you boys show him.*" Inquiry proved that the expression was then current in Denver, although it had not been heard in Kansas City or other parts of Missouri. Further investigation revealed that the phrase had originated in the mining town of Leadville, Colorado, where a strike had been in progress for a long time, and a number of miners from the zinc and lead district of Southwest Missouri had been imported to take the places of the strikers. These Joplin miners were unfamiliar with the methods in use in the Leadville district, it being necessary to give them frequent instructions. In fact, the pit bosses were constantly using the expression "*That man is from Missouri, you'll have to show him.*" The phrase soon became current above ground, and was used as a term of reproach by the strikers and their friends toward all the men who were at work

W. M. LEDBETTER in *St. Louis Star* as quoted in *The Literary Digest* Jan. 28, 1922, 44

**mistake one's man.** [U. S.] To be deceived in the character of a man.

Did the gentleman think he could frighten me from my purpose by the threat of a Grand Jury? If that was his object, let me tell him he *mistook his man*

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Speech in the House of Representatives, Feb. 9, 1837.

**Mistress of the world.** Rome when all nations of the known world gave it allegiance.

**mitten, to get the.** To be rejected as a lover, i.e., to be given or get only the mitten, with the desired hand withdrawn. Also, to be dismissed, as from office or position.

Life-boat hands who are found shrinking,  
Or with fear of danger smitten,  
*Get*, not medals, but the *mitten*.

*Punch* March 1, 1884.

**mittens, to handle without.** To handle roughly; to handle without gloves.

**mix up.** To muddle, confuse, make a mess of; to involve or implicate. (He) had been *mixed up*, very much against the grain, in an abortive plot for the assassination of the late King.

E. DICEY *Victor Emanuel* 53.

**moccasin.** [U. S.] A sandal of deerskin or other soft leather first made and worn by American Indians, now frequently worn also by whites.

**moccasin snake.** [U. S.] A venomous snake of the South, of which there are two varieties, the cottonmouth, which is found in upland regions and the **water moccasin** which has aquatic habits.

The undrained plantation is becoming the swampy pleasure ground of the alligator and *moccasin*

S. S. COX *Eight Years in Congress* 390.

**modus operandi.** [L.] Literally, mode of operating. In modern usage, the manner in which a person sets about his work; hence, method of procedure.

It would hardly be in the public interest to disclose his *modus operandi*.

R. GRAHAME *Pagan* p. 87.

**modus vivendi.** [L.] Literally, a mode of living; in diplomacy, a temporary arrangement between two sovereignties providing for the conduct of certain affairs.

The Russian Government and the Pope have arranged a *modus vivendi*.

*The Standard* London, Dec. 27, 1882.

**Mohammed will go to the mountain, if the mountain will not come to Mohammed.** If we can not obtain what we wish without exertion we must exert ourselves to get it.

**Mohawk or Mohock.** 1. One of a tribe of American Indians who lived near the Mohawk River, in what is now the State of New York.

2. [Brit.] One of a band of lawless persons, often aristocratic rakes, who frequented the streets of London at the beginning of the 18th century.

Did I tell you of a race of rakes, called the *Mohocks*, that play the devil about this town every night, slit people's noses and beat them?

SWIFT *Journal to Stella* Mar. 8, 1711.

**mollycoddle.** Any excessively effeminate person; one who is coddled or coddles himself; sometimes abbreviated *moll* and *molly*.

**Molly Maguire.** One of a secret society that terrorized the coal-regions of eastern Pennsylvania (1867-77), committing many murders and other outrages, until broken up by the conviction and execution of several of the ringleaders. so called because their warning and threatening letters were signed "Molly Maguire." Originally, one of a secret society in Ireland (1843) organized to prevent evictions by terrorizing process-servers, etc. so called from their disguising themselves in women's clothes.

**moloch.** Any pernicious influence or fearful object (as the sun-god of the Phenecians whose worship included human sacrifice) to which terrible sacrifices are made. Hence, anything that causes the loss of life, or the surrender of principles.

Lives have been sacrificed to the *Moloch* of high pressure steam.

*Civil Engineering Journal* I, 394, col. 2 (1838).

**mome.** A buffoon, clown or harlequin; a low jester, wag or joker; also, a blockhead; a dolt.

*Mome*, malt-horse, capon, coxcomb, idiot, patch!

Either get thee from the door, or sit down at the hatch

Dost thou conjure for wenches, that thou call'st for such store,

When one is too many? Get thee from the door

SHAKESPEARE *Comedy of Errors* act iii, sc. 1.

**money, make.** To amass wealth or gain money in business.

**money makes the mare go.** Much can be accomplished with capital.

"Will you lend me your mare to go a mile?"

"No, she is lame leaping o'er a stile."

"But, if you will let her to me spare,

You shall have money for your mare."

"Oh, ho! Say you so?"

Money will make the mare to go."

*Old Glee and Catches.*

**monk.** A black smudge or blotch caused by too much ink in printing.

**monkey, n.** 1. A mischievous boy; an imp; as, "Stop that, you young monkey!" 2. Temper; anger; especially in the phrase to get one's

**monkey up.** To arouse one's temper. 3. Five hundred pounds sterling. 4. Five

hundred dollars 5. [Austral] A sheep—a **monkey on a house**. A mortgage; or, among lawyers—a **monkey's allowance**. More blame than pay, more kicks than halpence—a **monkey with a long tail**—**monkey board**. A step used formerly by omnibus conductors from which they hailed fares—**monkey's money**. Goods or labor, also, grumbling and grimaces—to **suck the monkey**. Same as **TAP THE ADMIRAL**.

Do you know what *sucking the monkey* means? It is a term used among seamen, for drinking rum out of coconuts, the milk having been poured out

MARRIAT *Peter Simple* 2.

**monkey, v.** To trifle or fool about *with*; to play with

It's just possible that I may have been *monkeying* with the cards a little.

FRANCIS *Saddle and Moccasins* 134.

**month of Sundays.** An indefinitely long period, as if every day in a month were a week.—**month's mind.** 1. An earnest desire or great longing. 2. See under **MIND**.

(1) I see you have a *month's mind* to them

SHAKESPEARE *Two Gentlemen of Verona* act i, sc. 2

**moon** is used idiomatically in a number of combinations.—**moon, v.** To wander about listlessly as if moonstruck; act dreamily.—**moon-calf.**

1. A listless or an absent-minded person; also, one of changeable or capricious disposition

Standing gaping at her like an old *moon-calf* as I am DICKENS *Barnaby Rudge* VI

2. One who is abnormally deficient in mental power, a congenital idiot

D'y'e think he'll ever marry a *moon-calf* like Madge?

SCOTT *The Heart of Midlothian* XXX.

3. One misshapen from birth, a monstrosity

How now *moon-calf*? How does thine ague? SHAKESPEARE *The Tempest* act ii, sc. 2.

—**moon-curser.** [Local, U S] One who wrecks ships or shares the spoil of shipwrecks—**moon-face.** A full round face considered as the standard of feminine beauty in the East—**moonfish.** 1. A fish found on the Atlantic coast of the United States, having a silvery much-compressed body 2. [Local, U S] An angel-fish

3. The sunfish or mola—**moonflaw.** An attack of lunacy or other defect supposed to be caused by the moon, a brainstorm or other mental derangement attributed to the effects of the moon

I fear she has a *moonflaw* in her brains

She chides and fights that none can look upon her

BROME, *Queen and Concubine* (1659)

—**moonflower.** One of several flowering plants Specifically (1) A climbing annual, allied to the common morning-glory, with large white flowers opening at night (2) The corn-marigold and the oxeye daisy both of which are called also *moon-daisy*—**once in a blue moon.** See under **BLUE**—**station of the moon.** A lunar mansion, as in astrology, one of the 12 divisions of the heavens, a house According to Oriental and medieval astronomers, one of the 28 divisions of the heavens occupied by the moon on successive days—**man in the moon.** 1. The fancied appearance of a face in the disk of the full moon, occasioned by its spots 2. An imaginary person but in English politics, one who finds money for illicit expenditure See the phrase under **MAN**—**the old moon in the new moon's arms.** The faintly luminous appearance of the dark portion of the moon shortly after new moon, occasioned by reflected light from the earth—to **bay the moon.** To engage in some futile enterprise—to **make believe or think that the moon is made of green cheese.** To

HOBB

They would *make men believe that the moone is made of greene cheese*

FRITH *Antithesis* 315.

Wee say of such an Idiot *hee thinkes the Moone is made of greene cheese.*

COTGRAVE *Dictionary* s. v. *Arjan*.

—**to shoot the moon.** [Eng] To avoid dextrant, or the payment of rent by removing one's property secretly in the night

It is well for the landlord to be about his own estate in Bow, where poachers often *shoot the moon*, ZANGWILL *Bow Mystery* 10.

—**wet moon.** The new moon, having one horn much lower than the other, resembling a tilted bowl. wrongly believed to be a sign of wet weather.

**moonish or moony.** Silly; dreamy; fickle; changeable.

Being but a moonish youth.

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act iii, sc. 2.

**moonlight flit or flitting.** A removal by night of one's household goods from one dwelling to another, as to evade the payment of rent or the possibility of distraint.

Probably Walkden wished to have his rent before it was due, that he might be safe against "a moonlight flit"

*The Athenaeum* London, Oct. 13, 474, 1866.

**moonshine.** 1. Any visionary plan, foolish talk or unpractical proposal As for all this talk about Federalism, it is moonshine It means nothing practical at all

*The Spectator*, London, Sept. 3, 1887

2. [Brit.] Smuggled spirits. 3. [U. S.] Illicitly made whisky.

A glass of real Hollands—genuine moonshine J. T. HEWLETT *Parish Clerk* 1, 9

—**eggs in moonshine.** Eggs broken in a dish and poached in butter and oil till the yolks set, and served with a sauce of onion, fried in oil, verjuice, salted and with nutmeg grated over them As a dish, it is called a **sop of the moonshine.**

Draw, you rogue; for though it be night the moon shines;

I'll make a **sop of the moonshine** of you.

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act ii, sc. 2.

—**gilded moonshine.** Money borrowed on a note of hand or on a sham bill of exchange.

**mop.** A grimace. Usually in the phrase **mops and mows.**

What mops and mowes it makes! Heigh, how it frisketh

Is't not a fairy? or some small hob-goblin?

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER *The Pilgrim* act iv, sc. 2.

**mop up the earth, floor or ground with.** To gain a complete victory over someone; knock down and drag out; thrash thoroughly.

Muck that's my opinion of him" . . . I'll mop up the floor with him any day

HENLEY AND STEVENSON *Deacon Brodie* I, iii, 1.

**more** is used in the following idiomatic phrases: **more and more.** In an increasing degree; with continual increase.

I love thee **more and more**: think **more and more**.

What's best to ask.

SHAKESPEARE *Cymbeline* act v, sc. 5

—**more by token** [Ir] As additional proof; in addition —**more or less.** Approximately; about, more in some examples, less in others

If they speak **more or less** than truth, they are villains and the sons of darkness.

SHAKESPEARE *1 Henry IV* act ii, sc. 4.

—**the more.** Still more, an added amount, on account of a reason previously stated.

—**the more haste the less speed.** The greater the hurry the less satisfactory the result —**the more...the more,** in proportion as —**to be no more.** To be dead.

**moss-trooper.** One of a class of border freebooters and marauders who formerly infested the mossy or marshy marches between England and Scotland; hence, any bandit or undisciplined soldier.

There was still a large class of **moss-troopers** whose calling was to plunder dwellings and to drive away whole herds of cattle.

MACAULAY *England* vol 1, p 221

**mother** is used idiomatically in various combinations.—**artificial mother.**

A chamber in an incubator kept at an exact temperature for newly-hatched chickens —**Mother Carey's chickens.** Stormy petrel, or other small petrel —**mother country, motherland.** One's native country; the land of one's birth —**mother-lode.** A Californian quartz vein traced for 80 miles from Amador to Mariposa —**mother-maid.** The Virgin Mary —**mother-map.** An original map made from surveys and serving as a model from which other maps are made —**mother-of-anchovies.** A fish, one of the family of saurels —**mother-of-coal.** A soft black compound, probably a transition product in the formation of coal, showing a wood-like structure —**mother-of-emerald,** n A bluish-green quartz once believed to be the mother of rock of emerald.—**mother-of-pearl.** The hard, iridescent internal layer of

sundry shells, nacre — **Mother of Presidents.** The State of Virginia. — **mother-of-thousands.** The Kenilworth ivy, also, sometimes, several other similar plants, as the strawberry-geranium — **mother-of-thyme,** *n* Creeping wild thyme — **mother of vinegar.** A stringy, mucilaginous substance formed in vinegar when it ferments. — **mother-of-wheat.** 1. The ivy-leaved speedwell 2. The purple cow-wheat. — **mother's day.** [U S] A memorial day in honor of mothers, observed annually in some States on the second Sunday (in schools, Friday) in May — **mother's-heart.** A common weed, the shepherd's-purse — **mother-ship.** A man-of-war used as a tender to small fighting-craft or air-planes — **mother-water.** The residual liquid remaining after the substances in solution have been deposited by crystallization or precipitation. Called also **mother-liquor.** — **mother-wit.** Natural or native wit.

**motor aristocracy.** The body of persons who own and operate, or own and hire others to operate, motor cars for pleasure. Compare CARRIAGE COMPANY.

**mount a breach.** Attack or enter a breach in a defense or fortification.

**mountain dew.** Moonshine liquor.

**mountain of a molehill, to make a.** To so magnify a trifle as to make something stupendous out of it; imagine a trifling difficulty to be an insuperable obstacle.

**mount guard.** [Military.] To act as a sentry.

The nature of that Watch was that each Burgher for perhaps 5 or 6 Days in a Month should mount guard *Gentleman's Magazine* VII, 538 (1737).

**mourning.** [Sporting.] Black eyes: whence, **half mourning,** one black eye; **full morning,** two black eyes.

His eyes were in mourning as the gentlemen of the ring say.

O. W. HOLMES *Guardian Angel.*

**mouth** is used in the following idiomatic phrases. — **by word of mouth.**

Orally. — **down in the mouth.** See under DOWN. — **from mouth to mouth.** From one person to another, as scandal or rumor spread from lip to lip. — **open one's mouth and put one's foot in it.** To interfere, meddle with or tell something that causes annoyance or trouble. Compare PUT ONE'S FOOT IN IT under FOOT — **to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth.** See under BORN — **to give mouth.** To yelp, cry said of hunting-dogs — **to give mouth to.** To utter; announce, express — **to have one's mouth made up.** [U S] To have an inclination for, have a peculiar desire for, as some particular food — **to make a mouth.** To make a wry face, as in derision; pout sneeringly — **to make the mouth water.** To cause to desire ardently from the increase in saliva brought about by the sight or expectation of appetizing food — **to open one's mouth wide.** To ask a high or exorbitant price — **to shoot off one's mouth.** To talk loudly and boastfully on a subject one knows little about — **to take the bread out of one's mouth.** To deprive one of the means of livelihood — **to take the words out of the mouth of.** To anticipate what a person is on the point of saying

**move heaven and earth.** To make unheard-of efforts to effect or obtain something.

Englishmen . . . would move heaven and earth to establish better conveyance, at a higher price. *A. Young Travel in France* 225.

**mows,** or as sometimes written **moes,** is perhaps a corruption of **mouths** formerly (14th cent.) spelled **mouthes.** See quotation in which **mowe** means to make mouths or grimaces.

To skoffe and mowe lyk a wantown ape.

LYDGATE *Minor Poems* 255.

**much** occurs in several idiomatic phrases. — **much about.** Very nearly; not materially: used of conditions or in making comparisons; as, the situation is **much about** the same as it was yesterday — **much about it.** About what it was or is — **much at one.** Almost alike in influence, effect or value.

The prayers are vain as curses, much at one in a slave's mouth.

DRYDEN.

—**much of a muchness.** About the same thing, about like in value.  
O child, men's men, gentle or simple they're *much of a muchness*

GEORGE ELIOT *Daniel Deronda* XXXI.

—**to make much of.** To treat with particular favor, show marked attention to  
—**too much for one.** More than one can manage; of persons, more than a match for.

**muck.** Money; filthy lucre: so called in contempt. Probably from the aphorism "Muck and money go together." JOHN RAY *English Proverbs*.

**mucker.** [Brit.] I. *n.* A coarse, vulgar person; a rotter; a cad. II. *v.* To make a muddle or mess of; blunder badly; fail, come to grief.

Welter has *muckered* . . . but worse than that, they say that Charles Marston's classical first is fishy.

H KINGSLEY *Ravenshoe* XIV.

**muck-rake.** I. *n.* A rake for collecting filth.

The source of the figurative use is Bunyan's description of 'the Man with the *Muck-rake*,' which was intended as an emblem of absorption in the pursuit of worldly gain, but in modern use it is often made to refer generally to a preference for what is comparatively worthless over that which is valuable, or to a depraved interest in what is morally 'unsavory' or scandalous

DR. HENRY BRADLEY in *New English Dict* vol 6, p 738.

II. *v.* To rake together scandal or make a habit of searching for, collecting, accusing of, or exposing by publication, corrupt practices or malfeasance in office, actual, alleged, or implied, as by officers of corporations and other public men, with good or evil intent or for political purposes in allusion to "the man with the muck-rake" in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and used as the subject of a speech by President Theodore Roosevelt, delivered in Washington, April 14, 1906, in which he deprecated vilification and "the effort to make financial or political profit out of the destruction of character"

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary* s v *muck-rake*

—**muck'-raker.** *n.* One who uses a muck-rake, hence, a collector of muck.  
See MUCK, *n.*, 3

The *muck-rakers* worked merrily for a time in their own bright sunshine, and an unthinking populace applauded their performance. Now there are few to do them reverence

*The Sun*, New York, April 12, 1906, p 8, col 3.

**mud** is used idiomatically in **mud-honey**: Vices indulged by men about town TENNYSON *Maud*.—**mud-slinger.** One who makes outrageous imputations, slanders, vilifies or decries, especially in the muck-raking press—to **throw mud at.** To defame by maliciously circulating false reports about, to calumniate

A woman in my position must expect to have more *mud* thrown at her than a less important person

FLORENCE MARRYAT *Under the Lilacs* VII.

**mudlark.** 1. A street Arab or neglected child that has the run of the street and picks up its living as it may. 2. A man who works in sewers.

**muff.** 1. A clumsy or stupid fellow; a dolt; also, a timid or weak-spirited person. 2. Anything done clumsily or awkwardly; especially, a failure to hold a ball which comes into one's hands.

They looked upon me as a *muff*, a milksop, and a prig

DU MAURIER *Peter Ibbetson* pt. ii, p. 106.

—**muff.** *v.* [Sports.] To bungle or fail to catch, as a ball, to miss, as a shot.  
I don't see why you should have *muffed* that shot

G. H. LAWRENCE *Guy Livingstone* VI.

**mug.** *n.* The face: origin obscure but traced by some to Sanskrit *mukha*, the face.—**mug.** *v.* 1. [U. S.] To photograph, as a criminal, for purposes of record and file by the police in a rogue's gallery. 2. [Brit.] (1) To strike or be struck in the face

"Suppose they had *mugged* you?" "Done what to me?" "Mugged you. Slogged you, yer know"

London Miscellany May 5, 1866.

(2) To grimace 3 The low comedian had *mugged* at him in his richest manner fifty nights for a wager.

DICKENS *Little Dorrit* 1, 20.

(3) To rob or swindle (4) To bribe with alcoholic beverages —to mug up. 1. To study in preparation for an examination, to cram, originally a college phrase  
 "Not clever," Iris corrected, "only well read. I've mugged it up out of books"

G ALLEN *The Tents of Shem* XXIV.

2. To paint or make up one's face. See MAKE UP.

He put on the clown's dress, got mugged up, and went into the ring

HINDLEY *Adventures of a Cheap Jack* 193.

**mugwump.** [U. S. Politics.] One who professes disinterested and independent views, and holds aloof from party politics.

The case of these independents or *Mugwumps*, is an illustrative one . . . very few . . . take an active part in 'politics,' however interested they may be in public affairs

BRYCE *American Commonwealth* II, iii, 379.

A *mugwump* is a person educated beyond his intellect

HORACE PORTER in the Cleveland-Blaine Campaign (1884).

**mulatto.** The offspring of a white and a negro. See MISCEGENATION.

**mule-skinner.** [U. S.] A mule driver, teamster.

**mull.** A mess, failure or muddle.

The party was a mull. The weather was bad. In fine only twelve came.

GEORGE ELIOT in her *Life* by J. W. Cross, II, xii.

—to make a mull of. To do awkwardly and inefficiently, make a mess of

"I always make a mull of it," he said to himself when the girls went up to get their hats.

TR ALLOPE *Last Chronicle of Barset* 153.

**mum.** Silence.—**mumchance.** One given to silence; a person who has little to say for himself; a dolt or numskull.

Methinks you look like *Mumchance* that was hanged for saying nothing

SWIFT *Polite Conversation* i.

—**mum's the word.** An admonition to keep a matter secret.

**mumble-news.** A tale-bearer; gossip.

Some *mumble-news*, some trencher knight, some Dick

SHAKESPEARE *Love's Labour's Lost* act v, sc. 2.

**umbo-jumbo.** An object of popular idolization, hence, a demagog; a charlatan or mountebank.

He never dreamed of disputing their pretensions, but did homage to the miserable

*Mumbo-Jumbo* they paraded DICKENS *Little Dorrit* i, 18.

**mumpsimus.** A mistake deliberately repeated as that traditionally credited to a monk who for the Latin *sumpsimus* persisted in reading *mumpsimus*. Hence, an ignoramus or obstinate ignorance.

**mummer.** A strolling player; hence, an actor. See MUMMING-SHOW.

You make faces like *munners*

SHAKESPEARE *Coriolanus* act 1, sc. 2.

Peeled, patched, and piebald, lunsey-wolsy brothers,

Grave *munners'* sleeveless some and shirtless others

POPE *The Dunciad* bk. iii, l 115.

**mumming-show.** A company of strolling players: from the practise of mummers who went from house to house at Christmastide in England and performed a whimsical version of St. George and the Dragon, etc

A scenic artist and actor . . . in a travelling *mumming show*, sharing at the drum-head my 4d. per night

LONDON *Figaro*, Oct 7, 1871.

**mummy, to beat to a.** To beat to insensibility.

Her face appeared to be smashed to a *mummy*. *Leeds Mercury*, May 28, 1890.

**mumping-day.** [Eng.] St. Thomas's day (December 21) on which the poor make begging expeditions: from **mump**, to beg.

When they come with their counterfeit looks and *mumping* tones.

LAMB *Essays of Elia*, Works. 389.

**murder will out.** The deed will reveal itself; hence, figuratively, the thing now kept secret is certain to come to light.

*Murder will out, that see we day by day* CHAUCER *C T*, *Nun Priest's Tale* 1. 232.

Used also declaratively.—**the murder is out.** The secret is revealed.

**mush.** [U. S.] Corn-meal (maize) boiled with water until it thickens, and eaten hot, with milk or cream, butter or sugar. Hence, anything soft and pulpy, twaddle, flappedoodle

—**don't get mushy.** Don't be silly, soft, or stupid; don't talk twaddle or bosh.

**muslin.** [Brit. Slang.] A young woman.

What was that pretty *bit of muslin* hanging on your arm—who was she

THACKERAY *Pendennis* 1.

**muss.** I. *n.* A disturbance, a row or fight; also a state of confusion or disorder. II. *v.* To spoil, confuse, disarrange.

The rude embraces of autumn have *mussed* her hair and rumpled her drapery.

Dow *Patent Sermons* i, 94.

**mustang.** [U. S.] 1. An officer of the United States Navy who entered the service through the merchant marine instead of by graduating from the Naval Academy. 2. The wild horse of the pampas or prairies; also, a pony.

Surefooted as these *mustang ponies* generally are GUNTER *Miss Nobody of Nowhere* V.

**mustard.** In the phrase **after meat, mustard**, the word connotes something not needed to add zest. Of any thing said or done too late the French say, "C'est de la moutarde après dîner," which may be rendered "It is the day after the fair." See under **DAY**—**all to the mustard.** Well done, satisfactory; pleasant, fit

**mustard-plaster.** One who clings to the company of others when he is not wanted.—**mustard-pot.** A hot-tempered irascible man.

**mute as a fish, mouse, etc.** Wholly silent.

The Nabob's friends . . . had stood all this while as *mute as fishes*

C. JOHNSTON *Hist. of Juniper* ii, 141.

**mutton-headed.** Stupid; doltish; thick-headed.

—**to eat one's mutton.** To dine

Will you *take your mutton* with me?

DISRAELI *Endymion* lxxvi.

**muzzle.** 1. To prevent from biting by putting a muzzle on. 2. To impose silence on; restrain from speaking.

What establishment can *muzzle* its fools and lunatics SYDNEY SMITH *Works* II, 200.

**muzzle the ox that treads the corn.** To neglect to pay for work done or to expect others to work for one for nothing.

**myrmidon of the law.** A bailiff or a sheriff's officer, or anyone of his attendants.

Lest my foes, the *myrmidons of the law*, should track the golden stream back to its sources, *Confession of Tacket of Leave Man* 160.



## N

**Nabob.** A very rich person who lives luxuriously.

**Naboth's Vineyard.** [Biblical] A property coveted by some one able to possess himself of it. King Ahab gained the vineyard through the murder of Naboth, brought about by Jezebel. See 1 *Kings* XXI 1-10.

**nag, n. 1.** A small riding horse or pony. **2.** [Scot.] A horse of blood. A hungry lion would fain have been dealing with good horseflesh, but the *nag* was too fleet. *L'Étrange Fables* (1620)

**nag, v.** To scold, find fault. Whence **nagger**, a persistent scold. Authors and critics cannot help *nagging* at one another. *BIRRELL Essays* XVIII, 208

**naïl.** To catch, to fasten, to secure; also, to steal.

Mrs Ogleton had already *nailed* the cab. *BARHAM Ingoldsby Legends* i, 25

**naïl in one's coffin, to add, drive or put a.** To do something prejudicial to; to hasten an end.

This dispelling of the illusion of cheapness should prove a *naïl in the coffin* of Co-operative Stores. *Society* London Feb 7, 1885

**naïl one's colors to the mast.** To decline to surrender, to adopt an unyielding attitude.

Mrs Chick had *nailed her colours to the mast*, and repeated, "I know it isn't" *DICKENS Dombey V*

**naïl, on the.** On the spot; cash down, at once; without delay. Chiefly used of making money payments.

*!We want our money on the naïl* *SWIFT Run on the Bankers Works* IV i. 22.

**naïl on the head, to hit the.** To touch the exact spot; hit effectively; say the right thing.

In giving their judgments they have not, forsooth, *hit the nail on the head* *WHITLOCK Zootomia* 75.

**naïl to the counter.** To expose as false, as a lie, as when a counterfeit coin is *nailed to a counter*.

A few familiar facts . . . have been suffered to pass current so long that it is time they should be *nailed to the counter* *O W HOLMES Med Essays* 67

**nails, hard as.** In prime condition; hard, unyielding.

Rathbeal. . . struck me as *hard as nails* not long ago *The Sportsman* London Mar 25, 1891.

**name.—his name is Dennis, or mud.** [U. S.] He is a failure or is marked for failure or disappointment.—**name the day.** To fix the date of a wedding

Then he made hot love to her, and pressed her hard to *name the day* *READE Hard Cash XXXIV.*

—**to call names.** See under **CALL** —**to name a member.** In British parliamentary practise to call to order by name a member of the House of Commons who repeatedly disregards the rules of the House and the warnings of the Speaker. When named the member receiving the censure of the House, must withdraw —**to take a name in vain.** To use a name profanely, lightly, or flippantly, as in profane swearing or light conversation

**Nancy, Miss.** An effeminate young man; also, a prim, prudish girl.

I think a dash of femininity in a man is good, but I hate a *Miss Nancy* *MRS LYNN LYNTON in The Speaker* July 20, 1901.

**nap. 1.** A short sleep; a siesta. **2.** Napoleon: a contraction of the name of a game of cards.

**nap, to go.** [Card-playing.] To undertake to win all five tricks in the game of napoleon; hence to stake all one can, to speculate heavily.

**napping, to catch one.** To take one unawares; take by surprize or asleep.

Nay, I have ta'en you *napping*, gentle love

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act iii, sc 2.

**narrow house or home.** The grave.

Wallace's camp or the *narrow house* must be our prize JANE PORTER *Scot Chiefs* XI.

**nasty.** [Brit.] 1. Offensive; obscene; indecent, as, *nasty* language; a *nasty* story. 2. Ill-tempered; cutting; disagreeable.

The lovely Fuschia possessed in reserve an immense relating power of being *nasty*, were she displeased

QUIDA *Moths* XV

—**nasty jar.** A stinging retort.—**a nasty one, or knock.** A disagreeable experience.—**a nasty one in the eye.** A telling blow.

**native.** [Australian.] A white person born in Australia, as distinguished from an immigrant. Since the foundation of "the Australian Natives Association," April 27, 1891, the term has not been applied to the aborigines.

**Native American Party.** [U. S. Pol.] The Know Nothing Party.

**native son.** [U. S.] A Californian by birth. Hence, one born in a place spoken of.

**natural.** [Brit. & U. S. Southern Dialect.] A simpleton, an idiot.

I own the man is not a *natural*; he has a very quick sense, tho' a slow understanding.

STEELE *Consc Lovers* act ii, sc 1.

**nature-faker.** A person who, in writing of animals, subordinates the truth to literary interest, commonly by a disproportionate exaggeration of some picturesque incident or trait; a fanciful interpreter of animal behavior: a term first used by Theodore Roosevelt in 1907.

**nature, in a state of.** 1. Naked. 2. Unredeemed from sin. 3. Uncivilized.

**nought or nought, to set at.** To disregard or discount; ridicule; make a mock of.

The public power which he so *sets at nought* SHAKESPEARE *Coriolanus* act iii, sc 1.

**naughty.** [Brit.] Loose, obscene, immoral, lewd.—**naughty pack.**

A man or woman of equivocal reputation

The *naughtypacks* or ofskowrings of men

I never heard she was a *naughtypack*

GOLDING *Calvin on the Psalms*.

SWIFT *Polite Conversation* p 106

**navvy.** [Brit.] A ditch digger, or other manual laborer. an abbreviation of "navigator," a word humorously applied to excavators employed on canals, dykes, etc.

They were called *navvies* from having been employed originally upon works of internal navigation

*The Builder* London Aug., 1872.

**near.** [Brit.] Mean, penurious or miserly; close, niggardly; stingy.

Mr. Barkis was an excellent husband, she said, though still a little *near*

DICKENS *David Copperfield* 124

**near side.** In riding or driving, the left side.

We are accustomed to approach all the larger domesticated animals by what we call the *near side*,—that is, the animal's left side

H STEPHENS *The Book of the Farm* II, 456.

**neat as a pin, a bandbox, a new pin, ninepence.** Very neat: tidy.

We've nobbled him, as *neat as ninepence*

HENLEY AND STEVENSON *Deacon Brodie* act iii, sc. 3.

**neck and crop, neck and heels.** In great haste; without delay; promptly, at once.

The first thing that we now did was to turn him out of the sick-house, *neck and heels*

M. G. LEWIS *Journal in West Indies* 137.

**neck and neck.** [Racing.] With equal speed in a race: specifically said of horses: used also figuratively.

It is a *neck and neck* race between the two emporiums [New York and London] which the world of 1920 is to see, with the odds slightly in favor of New York.

CARNEGIE *Triumphant Democracy* 51.

**neck: on, over, or in the neck of.** In immediate connection with; immediately after.

My trouble came tumbling upon me *again*, and that *over the neck* of all my reformation

BUNYAN *Works, Pilgrim's Progress* i, 158

—**neck or nothing.** [Brit.] Regardless of risk, at all hazards a phrase adopted from steeplechasing

*Neck or nothing*, come down or I'll fetch you down SWIFT *Polite Conversation* I

—**neck-verse.** A verse set for a malefactor to read. If he read it, he obtained benefit of clergy and was branded instead of being executed, hence, a phrase on the saying of which one's fate depends, a shibboleth.

**necktie party or sociable.** [U. S.] A euphemism for a murder, or lynching.

A lynching is gracefully described as a *necktie party* Spectator London Oct 7, 1893

**needful, the.** [Brit.] Money.

Let me have the pleasure of lending an old college-mate some of the *needful*

HOOD *Pen and Pencil Pictures* 153.

**needle.** [Brit.] To pierce, as with a needle; hence, to irritate; vex; as, the remark *needled* his feelings; hence, **to get the needle**, to be vexed or irritated.

"It give 'im the *needle* . . . being left in the lurch this way Punch July 30, 1845.

**needs must when the devil drives.** One must submit to necessity.

If I must, I must.

*He must needs go that the Devil drives*

SHAKESPEARE *All's Well That Ends Well* act i, sc. 3.

**neither hay nor grass.** Neither one thing or the other.

**nem. con.** [L.] *Nemine contradicente* (no one contradicting, i.e., unanimously).

I thought that you had always been allowed to be a poet, . . . a bad one, to be sure, but still always a poet, *nem con*

BYRON *Let to Moore* Mar 1, 1822.

**ne plus ultra.** [L.] 1. Nothing more beyond; the extreme or utmost point; perfection. 2. An insuperable obstacle. 3. A command to proceed no further.

**Neptune's sheep.** Crested waves; white caps; sea-horses.

**nerve.** Audacity; impudence, cheek; hence, **to have the nerve**, you've got a nerve, what a nerve? etc

How Messrs. Gordon and Levett can *have the nerve* to refer to the evidence given at the Royal Commission on money lending, etc The Critic London, Jan 21, 1899.

**nest-egg.** 1. Something laid by, as a sum of money, as a nucleus for future accumulation. 2. Something purposely displayed or exhibited as an inducement; a decoy: as an artificial or a natural egg kept in a nest to attract a hen. 3. Something kept concealed or in reserve.

(1) The first guinea which he had saved . . . had proved the *nest-egg* of future guineas. SMILES *Stephenson* 51.

**nettle.** To irritate; annoy; provoke.

We have *nettled* him. Had we stung him to death it were but justice

MASSINGER *Parliament of Love* act iii, sc. 1

**never, I, or I never did!** Exclamations of astonishment, doubt or protest.

Also, sometimes, **Well, I never!** a contraction of "*Well I never did hear or see anything to equal [whatever is referred to]*"

"*I never did!*" exclaimed Eliza Sampson, when her brother had read the brief letter aloud Eliza was always protesting that *she never did*. This somewhat unmeaning phrase was her favourite expression of astonishment. M. E. BRADDON.

**Never, Never Country or Land.** [Australian.] All that portion of Queensland north or west of Cape Capricorn.

The weird '*Never, Never Land*,' so called by the earliest pioneers from the small chance they anticipated, on reaching it, of ever being able to return to civilization. A. J. VOGAN *The Black Police* 85.

**never say die.** Never give way to despair; never give up.

**new chum.** [Australian.] A recent arrival, especially from Great Britain; a tenderfoot.

**next door to.** See under **DOOR**.

**next parish to America.** [Irish.] Arran.

Just sixteen miles beyond Barna, and at the mouth of the Bay of Galway is Arran island, which people here call the *Next Parish to America*

*The Daily News* London December, 1887.

**next to nothing.** Almost nothing.

**N. G.** [U. S.] No good

The bells, boys, and engines tried to get up a fire last night, but it was *N. G.*

*St. Louis Daily Pennant*, June 20, 1840.

**nibble. 1.** To consider an opportunity or a bargain, as a fish is supposed to consider a bait. **2.** To make captious criticisms; offer trivial objections to.

Reviewers have *nibbled* at phrases and special criticisms, but have avoided the principal questions. E. WHITE *Life in Christ* Pref. 4.

**nibs.** A humorous personal title applied in ridicule to one who forgets that all men are born free and equal.—**His nibs.** A person suffering from an exaggerated idea of his importance on God's footstool.

To show *his royal nibs* that he's been thoughtless. A. ADAMS *Log Cowboy* xxi, 333.

**nicety, to a.** With close accuracy.

**Nicholas, St.** The patron saint of scholars and schoolboys.—**St.**

**Nicholas' clerks. 1.** Poor scholars. **2.** Highwaymen.

Sirrah, if they meet not with *St. Nicholas' Clerks* I'll give thee this neck

SHAKESPEARE *I Henry IV*, act ii, sc. 1.

**nick.** A point of time; especially in the phrase, **in the nick of time**, at the critical moment.

I never could have found him in a sweeter temper . . . to be sure, I'm just come in *the nick!* SHERIDAN *The Rivals* act iv, sc. 3.

**Nick, Auld or Old.** Same as **AULD CLOOTIE**.

**nickel.** [U. S.] A five cent piece, a jitney, half a dime.

**night cap.** A drink of wine or liquor taken just before going to bed to induce sleep.

A pint of brandy and hot water by way of a *night cap*.

MARRYAT *F. Mildmay* XXIII.

**nightmare and her ninefold, the.** An apparition as in a dream at night.

St. Withold footed thrice the old,

He met the *nightmare* and her *nine-fold*.

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act iii, sc. 4.

**night-rider.** [Southern U. S.] One of a band of masked mounted men who travel at night to intimidate, as by burning barns, etc. During 1907 and 1908 large bands of these men burned property to the value of several hundred thousand dollars in Kentucky in the "tobacco war."

The first appearance of the *night-riders* was in November, 1906, when they destroyed some tobacco-barns and small factories in Todd County with a loss of about \$10,000.

*The Literary Digest* Dec. 28, '07, p. 976.

**nine days' wonder.** Some fact or event that excites public wonder for a few days.

*King Edward.* You'd think it strange if I should marry her.

*Gloucester.* That would be *ten days' wonder* at the least

*Clarence.* That's a day longer than a wonder lasts

SHAKESPEARE *III Henry VI* act iii, sc. 2.

**nines, to the.** To a high state of perfection.

When she's dressed up to the *nines* for some grand party

THOMAS HARDY *Ethelberta* III.

**nip.** [Brit.] To take a drink.

Women have slowly but surely learned the fatal habit of *nipping*, and slowly but surely become confirmed dipsomaniacs.

*The Lancet* London No. 3452.

**nip along.** To move speedily.

**nip and tuck.** Neck and neck; touch and go.

**nip in the bud or blossom.** To destroy in the first stage of development: from the checking of the growth of a plant by pinching off the buds or shoots.

This and many other noble projects were *nipped in the bud* by the untimely death of Charles III

BUCKLE *Hist. Civil.* II. viii.

**nipper.** A child: usually, a boy.

**nix.** 1. No, not; nothing: derived from the Dutch. 2. Beware; lookout; stop: a schoolboys' word of warning of the approach of some one in authority — **keeping nix.** Keeping watch — **nixes.** [U. S.] In the postal service mail matter that can not be forwarded because it is not clearly addressed.

**no-account.** [Southern U. S.] Worthless.

The whole town's excited over a nice man a-throwing himself away on a *no-account* woman like her.

ELLA HIGGINSON *Tales of Puget Sound*, 71.

**no chicken.** Advanced in years; not in the chicken or pullet class: used derogatively.

**no end.** A great deal or quantity; great many: used as an intensive.

I had, as the phrase goes, *no end* of things to provide

GRANT *One of the Six Hundred* XIV.

**no flies on.** [U. S.] Active and wide awake; never at rest long enough for flies to settle on: applied in praise to a person or thing.

*No flies on him*, signifies that he is not quiet long enough for moss to grow on his heels—that he is wide awake

*Detroit Free Press* Aug. 25, 1888.

**no go.** [Brit.] No use, impossible.

But it was *no go*; them as gathered round wouldn't part

FARJEON *Betrayal of John Fordham* III, 281.

**no kid.** No deception; no mistake; no joke.

A gal in a white dress a-waiting on me—a real lady, *no kid*.

EMERSON *Signor Lippo* XX.

**no man's land.** The strip between opposing first line trenches in war; in older usage, waste ground or barren stretch between two kingdoms

or provinces. The phrase occurs in the Chronicles of Edward I and Edward II (Rolls I, 291·1320).

This was a kind of border that might be called *no man's land*

DE FOE *Robinson Crusoe* II, 563.

**no more.** Dead.

Cassius is *no more*

SHAKESPEARE *Julius Cæsar* act v, sc 3.

**no odds.** [Brit.] No matter; of no importance.

"No odds," returned Mr Chivery "Never mind" DICKENS *Little Dorrit* I, xix

**no two ways about it.** No alternative; no way to evade it; also, no chance for more than one opinion.

You must come, there are *no two ways about it*.

C A BRISTED *The Upper Ten Thousand* 80

**nob.** 1. A person of social distinction; a nobleman, swell Abbr. of NOBLEMAN.

Capital house, Mr Newcombe, wasn't it? I counted no less than fourteen *nobs*

THACKERAY *Newcomes* II, 58

2. The head.

A thought has crossed my *nob*

DOWLING *Othello Travestie* act 1, sc 3

**nobby.** [Brit.] Stylish; elegant, fashionable; smart.

**Nob Hill.** [U. S.] A name sometimes applied to the aristocratic suburb of a city, possibly suggested by *Nob Hill*, San Francisco, Cal.

**noble art of self defense.** [Brit.] Pugilism; boxing

**nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse.** See under BLIND.

**Nod, land of.** See under LAND.

**nod, on the.** [Brit.] On credit.

He didn't suppose the gov'nor would take him *on the nod*

MOORE *Esther Waters* XXXI

**noddle.** The head

Doubt not her cares should be to comb your *noddle* with a three legged stool, and paint your face, and use you like a fool

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act i, sc 1.

**noggin.** A wooden cup, made like a cask, hence, **to go to noggin staves.** To fall to pieces, disintegrate.

If the Lord had not fought for us, she'd have been beat *to noggin staves* there on the beach.

KINGSLEY *Westward Ho!* XIX

**nom de guerre.** [Fr.] A war-name, as in former times assumed by a French soldier; now, any assumed name.

**nom de plume.** [Fr.] A pen-name; a writer's assumed name.

Sylvanus Urban was the *nom de plume* adopted by the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

TREVELYAN *Macaulay* vol II, p 293.

**nonce, for the.** For the present time or occasion.

And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him

A chalice *for the nonce*

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act iv, sc. 7.

**noodle.** A simpleton; blockhead; simple Simon.

The whole of these fallacies may be gathered together in a little oration which we will denominate the *noodle's* oration.

SYDNEY SMITH *Review of Bentham on Fallacies*

**Norfolk capon.** [Brit.] A red herring. See CAPON.

A *Norfolk Capon* is jolly grub

SMITH *Individual* 4

**Norfolk Howard.** [Brit. Slang.] A bedbug; crimson Rambler; scarlet creeper. Dr. Murray says: "From an advertisement in the *Times* of 26 June 1862, professing to be a declaration by one Joshua Bug that he had assumed the name of *Norfolk Howard*."

*New Eng. Dict.* s. v. *Norfolk Howard*.

**norther.** [U. S.] A strong wind from the north which sometimes blows in Florida, Texas, and the Gulf of Mexico during autumn or winter, often accompanied by freezing cold.

**nose** is used with varying significance in the following idiomatic phrases:  
**as plain as the nose on one's face.** Plain beyond argument; indisputable — **at, before or under one's very nose.** In close proximity, before one; also, in defiance of one — **bull-nose.** A front coupler on a locomotive — **in spite of one's nose.** Notwithstanding the objections made or opposition offered — **nose-bag.** A feed-bag for a horse — **nosegay.** A posy hence, anything fragrant — **nose-led.** Domineered over, controlled, as an animal — **nose of wax.** One who or that which is easily influenced or controlled

He was a *nose of wax* with this woman DISRAELI *Endymion* III, xxx, 300  
**—nose-painting.** The coloring of the nose by drink SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* act II, sc 3  
**—nose-tax.** A personal tax, used in derision — **nose to nose.** Directly facing, face to face — **parson's nose.** The rump of a fowl, turkey, etc., when cooked — **to bite or cut off one's nose to spite one's face.** To do something that works harm or injury to oneself in trying to hurt another, avenge oneself at one's own expense — **to bite or snap off one's nose.** To answer sharply or snappishly

I asked him if he was at his leisure for his chocolate . . . but he *snap'd my nose off*; no, I shall be busy here these two hours MRS. CENTLIVRE *Busy Body* I, 1.

**—to count noses.** To reckon a number of persons present — **to follow one's nose.** To be guided by instinct, proceed directly forward

The main Maxim of Epicurus's Philosophy was to trust to his Senses and follow his nose BENTLEY Boyle *Lectures* II, 79.

**—to keep, put, or hold one's nose or face to the grindstone.** See under GRINDSTONE — **to lead by the nose.** To so dominate or influence (a person) as to control them at will

Though authority be a stubborn bear, yet he is oft *led by the nose* with gold

SHAKESPEARE *Winter's Tale* act IV, sc 4.

**—to make a bridge of one's nose.** To offer to do one a kindness and then pass one by and do it to another, also, to advance oneself by taking something designed to help another — **to make one's nose swell.** To awaken envy or jealousy in.

He heard Lord Altham say, my wife has got a son, which will *make my brother's nose swell*. HOWELLS *State Trials* XVII.

**—to measure noses.** [Brit.] To meet — **to pay through the nose.** To pay a fancy price or be charged exorbitantly, to pay unwillingly at once the full amount — **to play with one's nose.** To poke fun at, ridicule, make a butt of — **to put one's nose out of joint.** To take one's place in the affection or favor of another; supplant, also, to displease, annoy

The King is well enough pleased with her, which, I fear, will put Madam Castle-maine's nose out of joint PEPPY'S *Diary* May 31, 1662.

**—to take pepper in the nose.** To grow angry, to take offense

He's a choleric gentleman he will *take pepper in the nose* instantly

MARSTON *What You Will* Induction.

**—to thrust (or poke) one's nose into.** To meddle officiously in other people's affairs

In those days no body *thrust his nose into*

WASHINGTON IRVING *Knickerbocker* 86.

**—to turn one's nose at.** To regard or treat with contempt or scorn

**—to wipe another's nose** [Brit.] To defraud, cheat, or deprive one of something.

**—under one's nose.** In one's very presence or sight

They continue to sin *under my very nose*

SHERIDAN *Dianna* act III, sc 6.

**—white nose.** A small wave with a white crest

**nostrum.** A quack medicine.

Purge with your *nostrums* and drugs infernal

The spouts and gargoyles of these towers,

Not me

LONGFELLOW *Golden Legend* I. i

**not by a jugful.** [U. S.] Not by a great deal: emphatic negation.

**not to know from Adam.** See under ADAM.

**not worth a row of pins.** [U. S.] Valueless; useless.

**note of hand or promissory note.** A written promise by one person to pay to another or to his order, or to bearer, a certain sum of money at a specified time.

She can have my *note-of-hand* for it all at fourteen days

TROLLOPE *Chronicle of Barset* XXXVII.

**note-shaver.** [U. S.] A money lender; usurer; discounteer of bills.

The wrinkled *note-shaver* will have taken his railroad trip in vain

HAWTHORNE *House of Seven Gables* XXIII.

**nothing for it.** Having no alternative.

Hansli had *nothing for it* but to obey

RUSKIN *For's Clavigera* LV, 196

**nothing to it.** Of no consequence or importance

**notions.** [U. S.] 1. Cheap and useful articles of a miscellaneous character as pins, needles, buttons, thread, wool, tape, elastic, etc.; hence, **notion counter or store.** The counter or shop where such goods are sold. 2. A caprice or whim. 3. An ingenious or useful device.

**nous.** [Brit.] Intelligence; acuteness; practical sense, shrewdness, wit: from the Greek *nous*, *noos*, mind.

It is only of late I have had the *nous* to see how wise she is

READF *Woman-Hater* XIV

**now and again, now and then.** Occasionally, sporadically.

**nowhere, to be.** [Brit.] To be unable to come near to or approach; be completely out of the running; be altogether outdistanced or thoroughly beaten. as, the black was first, the rest were *nowhere*.

To the philologist, and the student of English literature, it is Oxford first, the rest *nowhere*.

The *Athenæum* Sept 14, 1895

**now then!** Now, for the next thing, get ready, come along also used as a warning to look out, or as an exclamation of impatience, often introducing reproof

"Keep your eyes open" said Wardle

"Now then"

DICKENS *Pickwick* xix

"Now then," said Amvas, "to breakfast"

KINGSLEY *Westward Ho!* XX.

**nubbin.** [U. S.] Anything dwarfed or imperfect: from an ear of corn of stunted growth.

Well . . . that's the littlest *nubbin* I ever did see

GEN H PORFER in *Century Magazine* Aug p 591.

**Number One.** The head of the Irish National Invincibles: generally identified as P. J. P. Tynan.

Mr. Tynan had charge of the active work of the Invincibles in the Irish metropolis and so far was the *Number One* wanted after Carey's betrayal, but he was not *Number One*, the supreme director of the conspiracy. *The Irish Republic*, April 28, 1894 quoted in PATRICK J. P. TYNAN *The Irish Invincibles*

**number one.** Oneself. Hence, to take care of number one. To look after oneself or one's interests.

We always took care of *number one*

MARRYAT *F. Mildmay* XIX.

**numskull.** A blockhead; simpleton; booby.

He considered them to be *numskulls* and little better than idiots

TROLLOPE *Chronicle of Barset* II, lxxiii.

**nunks, nunky.** [Brit. Colloq.] Uncle.—**nunky pays.** The Government pays.

Old *nunky* looks upon you as still belonging to him

CHARLOTTE SMITH *The Young Philosopher* I, 101

*Nunky pays* for all

Zeluca III, 232 (1815)

The comments you make on any glaring wastefulness are carelessly met by the slang phrase, *Nunky pays*.

HERBERT SPENCER.



**nup** or **nupson**. A nincompoop, simpleton.

I say Phantastes is a foolish transparent gull; a mere fanatic *nupson*

*Lingua, Old Plays* v, 238

**nurse**. 1. To foster and conserve; as, to *nurse* one's resources. 2. [Sports.] To keep balls close in play, as at billiards.

**nut**. 1. The head. 2. [Brit.] A dandy; dude; fancy dresser. 3. [U. S.] A silly or eccentric person; lunatic.—**hard nut**. A desperado; bravo; bad man.

**Nutmeg State**. Connecticut: so called because of the story that imitation nutmegs were made there, and sold by Connecticut peddlers — **wooden nutmeg**. A fraudulent device or plan, any deception or swindle

*Wooden nutmegs* have to answer for forged telegrams, political tricks, and falsified election returns

DE VERE *Americanisms* 620

**nutshell, in a**. In brief and concise statement.

The simplest thing in the world. It lies *in a nutshell*

DICKENS *Barnaby Rudge* xxix

**nuts to**. A source of gratification or pleasure.

To see me here would be simply *nuts to* her F R STOCKTON *House Martha* 208

—**to be nuts on or upon**. [Brit.] To be very fond of or devoted to, to be greatly delighted with or set great store by

My aunts is awful *nuts* on Marcus Aurelius

BLACK *Princess of Thule* XI

**nut to crack, a hard**. A question difficult to answer, a problem difficult to solve; something involving effort or difficulty.

Enough has happened, one would think, to convince your ministers that the Americans will fight, and that this is a *harder nut to crack* than they imagined.

B FRANKLIN *Autobiography* II, 344

**nutty**. Completely unbalanced, far gone in fondness; crazy; mad; eccentric.

## O

O<sup>1</sup>. A descendant: from the Irish *O*, son, a patronymic prefix of Irish names, as *O'Brien*, *O'Toole*, etc., equivalent to the Gaelic *Mac*.

O<sup>2</sup>. An explanation of lamentation — **O's of Advent**. Seven anthems sung on days next preceding Christmas Eve, each having a special invocation to Christ beginning with *O*

These feasts were called *O's*, because at vespers on these days the anthems all began with *O* *Fortnightly Review* lix, 131 (1896)

—**O's of St. Bridget**. Fifteen meditations on the Passion of Christ each beginning with an invocation as *O Jesu!* Called also the **Fifteen O's**.

Thys be the *XV oos* the wych the holy virgyn Saint Brigitta was[wont] to say dayly before the holy roodes

*Horæ Beatissime Virginis Mariæ*

O<sup>3</sup>. An ejaculation expressive of a wish: an elliptical form; as, *O*, stay! The object of desire sometimes follows in an interjectional or elliptical phrase, being joined to *O* by *for* if expressed by a substantive, or by *that* when expressed in a subjunctive clause, as, *O that* the day would come!—**O dear!** An exclamatory phrase expressive of disappointment, surprise, etc Sometimes rendered *O dear me!*

**oak, to sport one's**. [Brit. Univ.] To exclude visitors by closing the outer oaken door of a student's apartment.

Mr. Verdant Greene had, for the first time, *sported his oak*.

CUTHBERT BEDE *Verdant Greene* I, viii.

**oar** is used in several idiomatic phrases.—**the oars**. The work of a criminal condemned to row an oar on a galley.—**to lie (or rest) on the oars**.

To cease from labor, rest at ease—to put in one's oar. To intrude remarks into other persons' conversation, intermeddle.

Now don't you put your oar in, young woman. You'd better stand out of the way, you had.

BESANT *Children of Gibeon* II, xxx

—to take the laboring oar. To do the harder part of a task—to toss (or peak) oars. To raise the oars out of the rowlocks to a vertical position.

**oat** is used idiomatically in the following phrases.—to feel one's oats.

To be conceited or self-important; also, to be frisky.—to have sown one's wild oats. To have given up youthful follies—to sow wild oats. To indulge in the follies or excesses to which youth is especially liable—wild oats. 1. The excesses and follies of youth.

Thus ended my first harvest of wild oats.

DE FOE *Captain Singleton* IX.

2. An extravagant youth, a spendthrift.

The tailors now-a-days are compelled to . . . imagine diversities of fashions for apparel, that they may satisfy the foolish desire of certain light brains and wild oats . . . given to new fangleness.

BACON *Works* p 204 (ed. 1843).

**obfuscate.** To perplex, muddle, confuse, obscure, darken.

**obs-and-sols.** Objections and solutions; a contraction of *objectiones et solutiones*, applied to scholastic subtleties.—obs-and-sollers.

A disputing pedagogue, a scholastic disputant.

To pass for deep and learned scholars,

As if th' unseasonable fools

Although but paltry Obs-and-Sollers;

Had been a coursing in the schools.

BUTLER *Hudibras* III, ii, 1241.

**observed of all observers.** The center of attraction or focus of attention; the cynosure of all eyes.

The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,

The observed of all observers

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act iii, sc. 1.

**occasion** is used in the following idiomatic phrases.—by occasion.

By chance; incidentally.—by occasion of. By reason or cause of; in consequence of, by means of, through—for one's occasion. On one's account, for the sake of one—on occasion. On suitable opportunity, at different times—to improve the occasion. To take advantage of an opportunity, to make the most of a chance.

His next thought was how to improve the occasion. FREEMAN *Norm. Conquest* III, xii.

—to take occasion. To avail oneself of the opportunity.

We can escape even now,

So we take fleet occasion by the hair.

SHELLEY *Cenci* I, v.

**ocean greyhound.** A fast ocean-plying steamship. The "Alaska" launched at the Fairfield shipyards in 1882, was described by G. L. Watson as "likely to prove the greyhound of the Atlantic."

An unarmoured cruiser, a commerce destroyer, to make a minimum of 21 knots an hour, and capable of catching any of the great ocean greyhounds.

*The Daily Chronicle* London, March 24, 1891.

**oceans of.** An unbounded expanse or an indefinite quantity, as oceans of air, money, etc.

**o'clock, like one.** [Brit.] Readily; quickly.

Toads are valuable animals, answers Jane. They eat the snails like one o'clock.

MISS BRADDON *Dead Men's Shoes* XX.

**octoroon.** The offspring of a white and a quadroon.

**odds.** Matters or conditions on an unequal basis or footing, as the proportions of a wager, which may be on, or against, any given chance or chances.—at odds. In disagreement—it's no odds. It is of no consequence, it is an even chance. Also, rendered it makes no odds.—long odds. A wager favoring the major probabilities, as 100 to 1 against an unknown horse in a big field, hence, a great deal, as, he was by long odds the heavier man—odds and ends. Remnants, scraps.—odds are even. The betting is even.—short odds. A wager in which

the betting is nearly even, as 10 to 9 —to ask no odds. [U S] To desire no favor or advantage —to give odds. To grant favorable terms to

The Jacobites . . . would not give the odds and could hardly be induced to take any  
MACAULAY *Hist of Eng* XXIV, iv, 593  
—to take odds of. To take advantage of —what's the odds? What is the difference?

**odious, comparisons are.** Comparisons excite disgust or are repulsive: a phrase originated by John Fortescue in his "De Laudibus Legum Anglæ," written between 1463 and 1471.

She and comparisons are odious.

JOHN DONNE *Elegies The Comparison*

**odor, bad, good or ill.** Bad, good or evil repute or estimation.

When a person is in ill odor it is quite wonderful how weak the memories of his former friends become.

SPURGEON *Treas. Dav., Ps.* cxiii 4.

**odor of sanctity.** Fragrance said to be emitted by the bodies of saintly people after death; hence, in figurative use, a state of holiness; virtuous reputation: used also ironically or sarcastically.

There is an odour of iniquity, you know, as well as an odour of sanctity.

R. A. VAUGHAN *Mystics* 1. 90.

**off.** [Brit.] 1. Out of date, off the bill. 2. In questionable taste; as, his story's a bit off.—gone off. 1. Disappeared 2. Deteriorated.—to be off. 1. To depart; leave or quit. 2. To refuse to negotiate further in trying to come to agreement —to go off. 1. To disappear 2. To deteriorate —to be well off. To be in comfortable circumstances

**off and on.** Now and then; occasionally; at intervals; intermittently.

I slept . . . off and on . . . all the way to Crewe MRS. CARLYLE *Letter.* III.

**off by heart.** Memorized.

**off-chance.** [Brit.] A bare possibility; remote chance; doubtful opportunity or hazard.

There was an off-chance he might go back on the whole idea.

STEVENSON *Beach of Falesa* 144.

**off color.** 1. Unsatisfactory in color, as a gem. 2. Bad or indecent by implication; of doubtful virtue; as, the story is off color. 3. Not fit; indisposed; of persons; as, he is a bit off color this morning. Also, disreputable, shady. 4. Imperfect; not up to the mark; defective.

He had mighty little English, and my native was still off colour

STEVENSON *Beach of Falesa* 120.

**offhand.** Without preparation; unceremoniously; as, to quote a poem offhand; she dismissed him offhand.

**off his nut.** Mentally unsound; crazy.

There are men who go off their nuts by the time they're worth a million or two.

MISS BRADDON *Strangers and Pilgrims* II. iii, 178.

**off the hinge.** [Brit.] Out of work. In the plural, eccentric mentally.

**off the reel.** [U. S.] Immediately.

**off with you!** Get out! go away!

**office, to get (or give) the.** To get (or give) the hint, "tip," or information.

Playing us foul, and giving the office to the Philistines.

J. T. HEWLETT *Parish Clerk* II, 258.

**oil** is used idiomatically in a number of phrases.—oil-man. 1. [U. S.] One engaged in the petroleum industry, whether as promoter, operator, engineer or employee. 2. [Eng] A dealer in sweet oil and edibles preserved in them as

sardines, olives—**oil of baston** [Humorous] A basting, a whipping or beating—**oil of birch** or (rarely) of **oak**. [Humorous.] A whipping with a birchen or oaken switch, a beating

And gie their hudes a noble curry. Wi' oil of ark.

BURNS *Prayer for Adam Armour* st. 6.

—**oil of palms**. [Brit] Money

I dare say you may manage to soften the justice's sentence by a little *oil of palms*.  
LYTTON *Paul Clifford* VIII.

—**oil one's old wig**. [Brit] To make one drunk—**oil-rock**. In a petroleum-field, the layer which produces oil—**oil-sand**. A sandstone bed in an oil-region, through which oil is obtained by sinking wells—**oil-smeller**. [U S] One who determines profitable locations for oil-wells by supposed ability to detect the odor—**oil-tongued**. Smooth of speech—to **burn** or **consume the midnight oil**. To study late into the night

Whence is thy learning? Hath thy toil  
O'er books consumed the midnight oil?

GAY *Fables, Shepherd and Philosopher* I, 16.

—**to pour oil on troubled waters**. To appease or pacify, as persons engaged in strife or disturbance used in reference to the effect of oil upon the surface of agitated water.

Then Mrs. Grantley sought to change the subject, and *threw oil upon the waters*.

TROLLOPE *Chronicle of Barset* II, xiii

—**to strike oil**. [U S] To bore into a stratum containing petroleum, hence [U S], to attain fortune or profit suddenly, as fortunes were once made in the oil-regions

We are a nation which has *struck it*.

LOWELL *Works*. VI. 207.

**ointment, a fly in the**. That which spoils the value or quality of something.

Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.

Ecclesiastes X. 1.

**O. K.** [U. S.] Correct: as a verb, to certify as correct; approve.

The first literary record we have of its use concerns "Andrew Jackson, Esq.," and is taken from the archives of Sumner County, Tennessee, dated October 6, 1790. Said Andrew Jackson "proved a Bill of Sale from Hugh McGary to Gasper Mansker, for a negro man, which was O. K." James Parton, author of a "Life of Andrew Jackson," published in 1860, suggested that O. K. was a misreading of an ill-penned O R—Ordered Recorded. (see vol 1, p 136)

Some persons claim that Andrew Jackson intended to use an Indian word and trace this to the Choctaw *oke*, "it is." There is no evidence that Jackson knew Choctaw or ever came into contact with Indians of the Choctaw tribe.

**old** is used idiomatically in a number of phrases such as the following: **old bean**, **old boy**, **old chap**, **old dear**, **old fellow**, **old girl**, **old man**, etc., in which the word conveys the sense of affection, cordiality, endearment, etc.—**of old**. Of ancient times or bygone years—**Old Abe**. Abraham Lincoln: a term of affection used after his election to the Presidency—**old as the hills**. Remote as antiquity, dating from far, into the past, ancient in origin, built or made long ago.

The superstition . . . is almost as *old as the hills*. *Tit-Bits*, London, April 23, 1898.

—**Old Bailey**. [Brit] The Central Criminal Court, in London, sometimes mistaken for a prison because it adjoined Newgate—**old bird**. A person who has a wide experience.—**old chum**. [Austral] An old settler—**old country**. One's homeland; the land of one's birth or one's parents' birth—**Old Dominion**. [U. S.] The State of Virginia Called also the *Mother of the Presidents*

The good *Old Dominion*, the mother of us all, will become a centre of ralliance to the states whose youth she has instructed. THOMAS JEFFERSON *Thoughts on Lotteries*.

—**Old Gentleman**. [Brit] A euphemism for the devil. Also sometimes **old gooseberry**.

The devil is not so black as he is painted, but that you may form such images of the *old gentleman*. etc.

DEFOE *History of Apparitions* 365.

—**Old Glory.** [U. S.] The flag of the United States of America, the Star Spangled Banner

—**Old Harry.** [Brit.] The Lord Harry, the devil, hence **to play old Harry.** To play the devil

I'm afraid he'll now take such steps . . . as will play *old Harry* with my hopes

W. C. RUSSELL *Jack's Courtship* xii

—**Old Lady of Threadneedle Street.** [Brit.] The Bank of England

The convenient and flimsy paper circulating medium dispensed by the *Old Lady of Threadneedle Street.*

MISS BRADDON *Henry Dunbar* xxv

—**Old Light.** A supporter of the Conservative party of the Scottish Church Also

**Auld Light.—old line.** Following the well beaten path, conservative —**old liner**

A conservative, a follower of the old school —**old maid.** 1. A woman who has not been married and has passed the usual age of marriage 2. A game of cards 3. A

bird, the lapwing 4. A soft-shell clam —**old man.** 1. [Biblical] Unregenerate human nature 2. One's father, employer, or commander usually with the definite article

3. An old friend or an intimate acquaintance, a chum an appellation. 4. An actor who plays elderly parts. 5. [Austral] The gray kangaroo (male) of full growth

6. A plant, the southernwood, also, the rosemary —**old-man-and-woman.** The houseleek. —**old man, old woman.** Husband, wife —**Old Nick.** The devil, Auld

Clootie —**Old Public Functionary.** President James Buchanan from a characterization of himself in a message to Congress, 1859 —**Old Reliable.** General H.

Thomas a nickname —**Old Rosey.** General William S. Rosecrans, a nickname. —**Old Rough and Ready.** President Zachary Taylor a nickname given to him

during his generalship in the Mexican War —**Old Rowley.** Charles II of England a name transferred from his favorite stud-horse to himself —**old salt.** A veteran

sailor. —**old school.** A school, or party advocating conservative principles, or abiding by old-fashioned or antiquated doctrines —**Old Scratch.** The Devil —**old-**

**squaw.** A black-and-white sea-duck variegated with pearl-gray and having elongated feathers —**Old Tom.** [Eng.] A gin named from Tom Chamberlain who

first distilled it for Hodges' Gin Distillery, London

When sweetened and diluted by the retailers gin is known as gin cordial or *Old Tom*

ALLBUTT *System. Med.* II, 846

—**Old Tom of Lincoln.** A bell which hung in the central tower of Lincoln Cathedral, England, cast in 1610 and recast into a new bell called *Tom of Lincoln* in 1835 —**old**

**wench, n.** An oldwife —**old wife.** 1. An old squaw 2. One of various fishes 3.

A cap or cowl for smoky chimneys 4. A babbling old woman. 5. A man with old-

womanish notions. —**old woman.** 1. A timid or fussy man, a man compared to an old woman 3. A wife or mother a familiar or vulgar term —**old-world.** 1. Of or

pertaining to the eastern hemisphere, specif., of or pertaining to the eastern hemisphere before the discovery of America by Columbus, when written with capitals, properly

two words 2. Belonging to the ancient world, or to a prehistoric period; old-fashioned; antique —**the Old Serpent.** The devil

**olive-branch.** A branch of the olive-tree, as an emblem of peace: from the olive-leaf brought back to Noah by the dove; children, in a jocular sense.

The wife and *olive branches* of one Mr. Kenwigs. DICKENS *Nicholas Nickleby* XIV.

**Olympiad.** The interval of four years between two successive celebrations of the Olympic games, by which interval the Greeks reckoned time to A. D. 394. Used erroneously, in modern revivals, to designate the games themselves.

**Olympic games.** 1. Athletic games and races held at the chief ancient Panhellenic festival of five days, which was celebrated every four years at Olympia in honor of Olympian Zeus. The victor's prize was an olive-branch, which carried with it great celebrity and often a statue at Olympia 2. A modern revival of the old contests. The first of these games occurred at Athens (April, 1896), in the ancient stadium, the second in Paris (June, 1900), the third in St. Louis (1904), the fourth in London (1908); the fifth in Stockholm (1912), and the sixth, to be held in Berlin (1916), was abandoned, owing to the World War. The games were resumed at Brussels, Belgium, in 1920. The events include the Marathon race, track-sports, wrestling, jumping, etc.

**omnibus bill.** [U. S. Pol.] A legislative act in which different subjects are united.

I am opposed to all *omnibus bills*, and all amalgamation projects.

MR. WINTHROP of Mass House of Representatives May 8, 1850.

**omnium gatherum.** [Brit.] A promiscuous assemblage; or a miscellaneous gathering, medley.

Our meeting was merely an *omnium gatherum* of all the party

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM *Court of William IV. and Victoria II.*, v.

**on** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases in which it is used with widely varying senses.—**neither off nor on.** Undetermined; irresolute; unsettled, fickle —**on and on.** Without ceasing, continuously, ceaselessly —**on the contrary.** On the other hand, to the opposite effect —**on to.** To or toward and on, on, to, upon sometimes written *onto* an expression analogous to *into*, but avoided by purists as colloquial or vulgar —**to be on.** 1. In sporting parlance, to accept a bet or bets, have a bet or bets made 2. [Eng.] To be ready for anything proposed, as a trip, a prank, etc 3. To be tipsy or getting drunk —**to be on to one, or on to it.** To be aware of one's intentions, understand the situation —**to be well on.** To have a fair chance of winning one's bet or bets —**try it on.** Make the attempt; attempt it

**once** is used idiomatically in the following phrases:

—**all at once.** All of a sudden —**at once.** 1. At exactly the same time, at the same instant, simultaneously, together, as, all spoke *at once* 2. Without delaying, immediately, as, come *at once* —**for once.** One time at least, at last, as, he has won *for once* —**once and again.** Now and then, at least twice —**once for all.** Finally —**once in a way.** Once at any rate, rarely, at long intervals Also sometimes **for once in a way.**

When a man has just *once in a way* made up his mind to self-sacrifice

JAMES PAYN *Luck of Darrells* vi.

—**once in a while.** Occasionally.—**once or twice.** A few times.—**once upon a time.** In days gone by or time past

*Once upon a time* there were gods only, and no mortal creatures

JOWETT *Plato* I. 134.

—**this once.** On this occasion only.

**one** is used figuratively or idiomatically in a few phrases.—**at one.** In agreement or accord; in harmony.—**in one.** In or into one whole; together, as, to join *in one* —**one by one, by ones.** One at a time, singly and in order —**one with.** Of the same kind as, or of the same substance with, identical with; also, united with —**one with another.** On the whole in general —**the one and the other.** The last-named and the first-named —**to make one of.** To constitute a part of, as an assemblage, take part in

**one-horse.** [U. S.] Paltry, inferior, small, no-account.

A country clergyman with a one story intellect, and a *one-horse* vocabulary.

HOLMES *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* II.

**one of these days.** At some future time, before long; soon. The use of *these* suggests time in the near future.

You will tell me a different tale *one of these days.* DICKENS *O. Twist*. XXXVI.

**one swallow does not make a summer.** One difficulty overcome does not mean that all trouble is over; winter is not over because one swallow has returned.

**one too many or much for a person.** Too strong or too cunning for an adversary.

You have lost, old fellow; I was *one too much* for you.

GABORIAU *The Mystery of Orcival*, X.

**only** is used idiomatically in the following:—**only just.** At a time in the immediate past; as, she was *only just* married.—**only not.** All but, little else than; as, the castle was *only not* given up to the enemy.—**only not all.** Almost all.

**O. P.** 1. [Theat.] Opposite the prompter and prompt side. 2. Out of print. 3. [Eng.] Old price, as in *O P Riots*, the riots that occurred in London when the populace destroyed the interior of Covent Garden Theater in September, 1809.

**open** is used frequently in various idiomatic phrases.—**open-air**. Out in the open; out-of-doors.—**open-air cure**. A method of treating patients suffering from tuberculosis by keeping them exposed to the air night and day.—**open and shut**. [U S] That which must be accepted or rejected in its entirety. I 'lowed we was going to make an *open-and-shut* trade that we could be proud of.

HARBEN Abner Daniel 153.

—**open a person's eyes** To cause one to see something he should not overlook; to make him aware of conditions or facts  
Already the eyes of her prelates . . . are being opened to the hollowness of the plea.  
2 Rev cxxxvi, 131

—**open as the day**. Utterly frank, free from cant, hypocrisy, deception —**open door**. In politics, the policy of giving to all nations alike the same trading privileges. Called also **open door policy**.—**open-eyed**. Alert, watchful, amazed —**open-faced**.

1. Frank, honest, simple 2. Uncovered, as by a case: said of a watch —**open-handed**. Liberal, bountiful, generous, giving freely —**open-hearted**. Candid, unreserved, free from guile, also, generous, open-handed —**open house**. A home in which hospitality is unstinted —**open-minded**. Not prejudiced, amenable to reason, without decided opinion —**open-mouthed**. Gaping, as in wonder or astonishment, also, greedy, voracious, noisy, clamorous —**open one's mouth too wide**. 1. To talk of matters with which one is not familiar 2. [Brit] To bid for larger quantities of stock than one can pay for —**open question**. Any matter concerning which individuals may entertain their own opinions, something undecided —**open secret**. That which may be ascertained by any one, altho not officially or formally published

It is an *open secret* to the few who know it, but a mystery to the many, that Science and Poetry are own sisters

SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK in W K Clifford *Lectures* Intro. I, i

—**open sesame**. A magical conjuration for opening closed or secret doors and gaining an entrance From the words by which, in the story of the "Forty Thieves," in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," the door of their cave was opened.

Genius was understood and poetry a sort of *Open Sesame* to every noble door.

OLIPHANT *Literary Hist of Eng* 1, 185

—**open shop**. [U S] A workshop where union and non-union labor is employed —**opentide**. 1. Springtime. 2. The period following the harvesting of grain when cattle may range over common fields —**to open a jack-pot**. In the game of poker, to initiate play upon receiving in the deal a hand containing a pair of jacks or higher —**to open out**. 1. To render possible of access by removing obstacles, to unfold, unpack. 2. To work out, develop 3. To show forth, reveal 4. To speak out boldly or freely —**to open the ball**. To be the first to dance at a ball, hence, to begin any systematic and energetic work, as a battle —**to open the mouth**. To speak —**to open the trenches**. To begin digging trenches in time of war, hence, to begin aggressive operations —**to open up**. To discover, explore, as, to *open up* a new country. —**under open sky**. Before the world, in the open, outdoors —**with open arms**. Cordially, gladly, with a warm welcome

And St John's self . . .

With *open arms* received one Poet more. POPE *Prolog.*, Sat. 142.

—**with open face**. With uncovered face, hence, figuratively, impudently, brazenly; boldly, confidently. —**with open mouth**. Agape, with astonishment.

**opine**. [U. S.] To form an opinion; to think.

Do we know that for a certainty? We do not, as I *opine*

Dow Jr., *Patent Sermons* IV, 16.

**oracle of sieve and shears**. A method of divination by means of shears stuck in the rim of a sieve, the sieve moving in response to questions. —**to work the oracle**. To secure a benefit by strategy, obtain money by borrowing under a plausible pretext.

**orange-blossom.** The white blossom of the orange-tree: much worn by brides as typical of purity. Orange-trees and the orange-blossom were introduced into England under Queen Elizabeth in 1595. See quotation.

This custom appears to have been introduced from France c 1820-30. According to Littré, "women at their marriage wear a crown of orange buds and blossoms, hence the orange blossom is taken as a symbol of marriage." MURRAY *New English Dictionary*. —to suck the orange. To absorb all value for oneself, leaving only the useless residuum or skin for another.

It is rather rough on the boy, I admit, to suddenly discover that his father has *sucked the orange*, and that he has merely inherited the skin.

HAWLEY SMART *From Post to Finish* 47.

**orc, ork.** A narwhal-like marine monster. A supposed deadly enemy of the whale.

I call him *orke*, because I know no beast

Nor fish from whence comparison to take.

His head and teeth were like a bore, the rest

A *masse*, of which I know not what to make.

SIR JOHN HARRINGTON's trans. of *Orlando Furioso* X, 87.

**order** occurs in a few idiomatic phrases.—a large order. [Brit.] See under LARGE.

—in holy orders or in orders. In the position of an ordained clergyman or minister of the Church, more fully, in minor or holy orders.

The clergy was divided into two classes, one of inferior clerks in minor orders . . . and the other of clerks in holy orders. LINGARD *Anglo-Sax Ch.* II. xii. 230.

—in order that. To the end that, with the intention that—order of the day.

1. The business set down for debate in a legislative body on a specified day. 2. Specific orders issued by a commanding officer to troops under his command. 3. The prevailing rule or custom of the time.

November's dark hours and gloomy fogs were once more the order of the day.

*Pall Mall Mag.* Dec. 1897, 583.

Economy in the public service is the order of the day

*Westminster Review* London Dec. 1887.

—to take order. To plan for the accomplishment of a purpose, take suitable action to secure a particular end.

Is any rule more plain than this, that whoever voluntarily gives to another irresistible power over human beings is bound to take order that such power shall not be barbarously abused? MACAULAY.

—to take orders. To enter the ministry of the church, to be ordained.

Yes, I shall take orders soon after my father's return.

JANE AUSTEN *Mansfield Pk.* I. ix.

**ordinary.** [Gt. Brit.] A public dinner at which each guest paid his part of the expenses, the amount ranging from eight pence to two shillings.

No fellows that at *ordinaries* dare

Eat their eighteen pence thrice out before they rise,

And yet go hungry to a play

MIDDLETON *Trick to Catch an Old One* act 1, sc. 1.

**other day, the.** Recently; a few days ago.

Changed Mr. Falconer's state-cup, that he did give us the other day, for a fair tankard. PEPYS *Diary* Feb. 12, 1664.

**ouche, owch.** A piece of jewelry, the form of which is uncertain, but it was probably either a brooch or necklace.

His jewels he thus disposed, to his daughter Stafford, an *ouche* called the eagle, which the prince gave him, to his daughter Alice his next best *ouche*

DUGDALE, quoted by STEEVENS.



**ouph.** A sprite or elf; a goblin; also, a fairy;

Search Windsor Castle, elves, within and out.  
Strew good luck, *ouphes*, on every sacred room,  
That it may stand to the perpetual doom

SHAKESPEARE *Merry Wives of Windsor* act iv, sc 5

**out** is used frequently in idiomatic phrases.—**out, alas!** An expression of grief equivalent to the simple exclamation, *alas!*

And out, he cries, *alas*, O worthy wight. SIR JOHN HARRINGTON *Ariosto* viii, p. 90  
—**out and out.** [Brit.] Thorough prime, complete

You are *out-and-out* the most independent radical for a lady I have ever seen.

E. L. LINTON *Patricia Kimball* vii

—**out-and-outer.** [Brit.] A superlative thing or person in either good or bad sense —**out at the elbows.** See under **ELBOW** —**outdo.** To exceed in performance; surpass; excel —**to outdo oneself.** To do better than ever before; make a supreme effort.—**out of God's blessing into the warm sun.** Into a worse position than before; out of the frying pan into the fire

Marks—removed from Carlisle to Samos in Greece, viz *out of God's blessing into a warme sunne*, as the saying is.

CARLYLE *Catalog of Bishops*, 1608.

—**out of.** 1. From or beyond the inside of 2. Beyond the limits, reach, scope, or proper position of 3. Without, as, *out of breath* —**out of character.** Not in keeping with proper character, unbecoming —**out of the common.** Extraordinary or remarkable, unusual —**out of frame.** Not in proper shape, in disorder —**out of order.** 1. Not according to the rules of debate 2. Not in order —**out of place.** Unsuitable, unseasonable.

The ordinary methods of controversy are entirely *out of place*

MAURICE *Theol. Ess* 77.

—**out of pocket.** Minus a sum actually expended or paid —**out of sight.** [U. S.] Of unusual excellence or superior quality applied promiscuously, as, the play was *out of sight*; she was dressed *out of sight* —**out of sight, out of mind.** Forgotten when not present.—**out of sorts.** Indisposed or unwell, dissatisfied or unhappy —**out of the way.** 1. Removed, as an obstruction. 2. Not easily reached, inaccessible

To hit upon an especially novel, *out-of-the-way* subject.

J. K. JEROME *Idle Thoughts* 63.

Nobody would think of building . . . in such an *out-of-the-way* place

MRS. RADCLIFF *Italian* xii.

3. Out of the proper course, hence, unusual; improper 4. Out of place, hence, lost; mislaid —**out of the wood or the forest.** Clear of embarrassing conditions; free from danger —**out of touch.** Not in accord, sympathy, or harmony —**out of use.** No longer in use —**out there.** [Recent.] At the battle-front or on the firing line — **out West.** In one of the Western States of the United States —**to be out.** 1. To be away from home 2. To be without office 3. To be mistaken

"He . . . has been very seldom *out* in these his Guesses" ADDISON *Spect* No 26.

4. To be no longer in fashion or in season 5. To be announced or made public, as a newspaper or book

The whole truth is *out* about us

W. P. MACKAY *Grace and Truth* iv.

6. To have been introduced to society: said of a young woman who has made her debut

Pray is she *out*, or is she not? I am puzzled.

JANE AUSTEN *Mansfield Park* V.

—**to be out with.** To have a disagreement or misunderstanding with a person; be at variance with

Things at home are crossways, and *Betsy and I* are *out*.

WILL CARLETON *Farm Ballads, Betsy & I* are *Out* I.

—**to call one out of his or her name.** See under **CALL** —**to put one out of the way.** To murder or slay one, especially for the purpose of getting rid of him —**to have it out with.** To have an altercation, or dispute, thrash out a question or solve a problem

Suppose we *have it out* here in the fields, decide the question so?

BROWNING *Red Cotton Nightcap Country* 382.

—**to stand out.** [Brit.] To take no part, o keep aloof.

**outfit.** 1. Equipment, whether of an expedition, a ranch, a tool-chest, a ship, or a mining plant. 2. [U. S.] A group of men in any kind of employment.

In the Far West and on the Plains, everything is an *outfit*, from a railway train to a pocket-knife. The word is applied indiscriminately,—to a wife, a horse, a dog, a cat or a row of pins. A. K. McCLEURE *Rocky Mountains* 217

The American herder speaks of his companions collectively as the ranch or *outfit* *Scribner's Magazine* (1887), 509

**out-Herod Herod.** See under HEROD.

**outrun the constable.** See under CONSTABLE.

**outside of.** Exclusive of besides.—to get outside of. 1. To master or understand. 2. To eat or drink; devour.

**over** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases.—**over again.** Once more; afresh; over.—**over against.** In front of; opposite.—**over and above.** Beyond what was estimated or intended, in excess—**over and over.** 1. Again and again, repeatedly, as, I told him *over and over*. 2. Repeatedly over, as, to *sew over and over*—**over the left.** Just the opposite an expression connoting that the words to which it is appended are to be interpreted as the reverse of what is really said

"Each gentleman pointed with his right thumb over his left shoulder. This action, imperfectly described in words by the very feeble expression of '*over the left*' . . . its expression is one of light and playful sarcasm." DICKENS *Pickwick Papers* xiii

—**over there.** [Recent, U S] At the front. See **OUT THERE**—**over the top.** [Recent] *Mil.* Out of a first-line trench into the open, as in an advance attack. sometimes used as an informal order meaning, above one's head. See quotation

Sarah returned briskly, bearing on her tray a plate of steaming soup. As she lifted the plate to pass it in over the shoulders of the Woman and the girl seated next to her she cried out

"Don't move! Low bridge! Comin' *over the top* with the hot soup!"

THE WOMAN WHO SAW in *The Sun* New York, May, 1921

**overland farm.** [Brit.] Land held by a particular tenure in the West of England; a farm without a dwelling-house on it.

*Overlands* are subject to fines, but not to heriots, suits and service

*England Displayed* 44

**overlook.** 1. To view or see from a higher place; command a view of from a higher position. 2. To superintend the construction of a building. 3. To disregard purposely, forgive, condone, as, to *overlook* a slight. 4. To fail to see, disregard accidentally, slight. 5. To bewitch or gaze upon with the evil eye.

To be *overlooked* is to receive a glance from some one who possesses the power of the evil eye, and is the cause of all kinds of mischief. JEFFERIES *Red Deer* p. 199

The firm belief in being *overlooked* is very much more common . . . than is generally supposed. JESSOP *Arcady* ch. ii, p. 59.

The evil eye . . . has blighted many of the lives that have come under its influence, and bad luck, illness, disease, and even death have attended others who have been *overlooked*

FRANK H. VIZETELLY *The Bane of the Evil Eye* in *New York Herald* Sept. 11, 1921.

**overseen.** 1. Misled; deceived.

Great Julius Cæsar was much *overseen*

With Cleopatra, the Egyptian queene.

TAYLOR'S *Works*, 1630.

2. Bewitched; enchanted; overlooked.

When any are bewitched, it is a phrase of speech among many to say, they are *over-scene*, i. e., lookt upon with a malicious eye. W. HOOKE *New Eng. Tears* 7.

**owl, drunk as an.** So drunk as not to be able to see: an idiotism referring to the dazed state of an owl in daylight. See BLIND AS AN OWL, under BLIND,

**owl in an ivy-bush, like an.** Concealed; withdrawn from public view; in a place of retirement: in allusion to the ivy-bush as a favorite haunt of owls.

**owls to Athens, to bring, carry or send.** To take a commodity where it already abounds; carry coals to Newcastle, perform a useless task.

The owl was the emblem of Pallas Athene, the patron goddess of Athens, and figured on all Athenian coins, tokens, etc.

**owl, to take.** To be offended

To take owl, to be offended, to take amiss

GROSE *Prov. Gloss* s. v.

**own, on one's.** [Brit.] By oneself; at one's own risk; on one's own account.

**own up.** [Brit.] To acknowledge as true; confess to be so, admit.

If you own up in a gemal sort of way the House will forgive anything

A TROLLOPE *The Duke's Children* xxxv.

**ox.** A fool. SHAKESPEARE *Merry Wives of Windsor* act v, sc. 5; *Troilus and Cressida* act v, sc. 1.—**the Dumb Ox.** Thomas Aquinas' so named by his fellow students because of his taciturnity —**the black ox.** Sorrow, misfortune, adversity —**to have the black ox tread on one's foot.** 1. To know the meaning of sorrow or misfortune 2. To be visited by death in allusion to the sacrifice of a black ox to Pluto

The black ox trod on the fairy-foot of my light-hearted cousin Fan

LEIGH HUNT *Autobiography* I, iv, 171.

**oyez!** Hear ye! a thrice repeated summons for attention by a public crier: a form derived from the Old French.

But when the Crier cried "O Yes!"

The people cried "O No!" BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends, Misadvent. at Margate* xvi.

## P

**P** is used sometimes as a letter and sometimes as an abbreviation of a word, especially in association with **Q** in certain phrases.—**to be P and Q.** To be of prime quality, as, *P and Q* bacon Hence, to measure up to standard in quality and quantity; be first class or excellent —**to learn one's P's and Q's.** To learn one's letters

And I full five-and-twenty year  
Have always been school-master here;  
And almost all you know and see,  
Have learn'd then P's and Q's from me

COMBE *Tours in Search of Consolation* I, 30.

—**to mind one's P's and Q's.** See under **MIND**

As to the origin of these phrases Dr Murray says "nothing has been ascertained" Taking advantage of the fact that *pee* was used in his time for a coat—a use that dates from the 15th century—and that *queens* were worn, Dekker played on the phrase with the punning allusion "Now thou art in thy *pee* and *cue*."

**Paas or Pace.** The Easter (Passover) festival.—**Paas day.** Easter day.—

**Paas egg.** An Easter egg as used in the sport of striking or rolling them together to test their strength —**paas- or pace-egger.** A performer in a mimic representation once customary in some parts of England at Eastertide

**pace, to keep.** See under **KEEP.**

**pace, to make or set the.** To fix the gait or rate of going, as the stroke of a boat: used also figuratively.

**paces, to put one through one's.** To try one out; test one's endurance or ability. Also, to bring to account,

**pack.** [U. S.] To carry; convey.

My shoes hurts my feet, an' I have to *pack* one of 'em in my hand.

EDWARD EGGLESTON *The Circuit Rider* 59

—to **pack in** or **out**. [U. S.] To enter or leave a forest, or woods, provisioned by means of packs —to **pack**, or **pack on**, **sail**. [Naut.] To utilize the greatest spread of sail possible without endangering the vessel

**package, original.** [U. S.] The casing in which imported merchandise is kept and handled in course of transportation, whether hogsheads, bales, bottles, or boxes. Hence, the right of transportation of liquors, before the Volstead law went into effect, from one State into another including the right of sale in the original packages at the place where the transportation terminates, except in so far as modified by act of Congress and the laws of the State as if produced there, and whether in the original packages or not.

**package store.** [U. S.] A store where, formerly, alcoholic drinks were sold in packages for consumption elsewhere.

**packet.** 1. A fast ship or boat, originally one under government control, for conveying mails in packages, and passengers at stated times; also, formerly, a passenger-boat on a canal.

Never once had that eager gaze been turned towards the *packet*, outward bound!

F. S. COZZENS *Sparrowgrass* Papers p. 106.

2. A group or small collection of objects or persons.

**packing, to send.** To start away with or as with a traveling-pack; banish or dismiss peremptorily.

**pack the cards.** [Brit.] To arrange playing cards in such manner as to deceive or trick one's opponent and win oneself; stack the cards.

She has *packed cards* with Cæsar. SHAKESPEARE *Antony and Cleopatra* act iv, sc. 12.

The poor King tried to *pack cards* with fortune. MCCARTHY *French Revolution* II, 76.

**packthread, to talk.** [Brit.] To talk covert obscenity.

**pact.** An agreement; covenant; compact.—**bare, naked, or nude pact.**

An agreement that can not be legally enforced, as for want of consideration —**pact constituent.**

A contract or compact between a people and its ruler or government whereby the country becomes a state, or its existing constitution is modified.

**paddle.** [U. S.] To beat with a paddle; spank.

His master had *paddled* to death three of his fellow slaves

*The Independent* May 15, 1862.

**paddle one's own canoe.** See under CANOE.

**Paddy.** An Irishman: a nickname for *Patrick* (*Padraic*), a common Christian name among Irishmen.

**padge.** To carry a heavy burden on a journey; hence, to plod or trudge along; as, pedlars *padge* their wares. Sometimes written *pag*.

He had to *pag* his rags back to London.

FENN *Cure of Souls* p. 27.

**pad in the straw.** A concealed danger; something amiss; a "snake in the grass."

Ye perceive by this lingering there is a *pad in the straw*.

STILL *Gammer Gurton's Needle*.

**pad the hoof.** [Brit.] To travel on foot; tramp; walk.

Stout fellows to *pad the hoof* over them.

IRVING *Tales of a Traveller* i, 225.

**pagoda tree, to shake the.** [Brit.] To make a fortune quickly in India. According to Yule and Burnell's *Hobson-Jobson*, "a slang phrase once current in England rather than in India."

He was offered a position in India, in the service of John Company, under whose *flag the pagoda tree was worth shaking*

MRS. E. LYNN LINTON *Paston Carew* III, 11.

**pain, to die in the.** See under DIE.

**pain, to give one a.** To annoy one or give one cause for uneasiness.

**pains, to be at or to take.** To exert oneself with care and attention; take trouble; endeavor; strive.

The University was at the *pains* of publishing a Latin paper to justify themselves.  
SWIFT *Sacramental Test* II, 1, 121.

**painter, to cut the.** [Naut.] To send adrift; cut away; prevent mischief, as by severing a painter, which is a rope.

**paint the town red.** [U. S.] To cause an excitement; go on a boisterous or riotous spree.

I have found them . . . in no way inclined to *paint the town and country red* on the slightest provocation.

CAPT M H HAYNES *Among Horses in Russia* 1, 36

**pair off or with.** 1. To separate in couples from a company; also, to marry. 2. To agree to abstain from voting when the votes if cast would neutralize each other.

(1) If they would only make a match of it, I should be free to *pair-off* with the lively widow.

MISS BRADDON *Sir Jasper* XXXV.

(2) Mr W B Barbour has *paired with* Mr T Lynn Bristowe from the 14th for the remainder of the session.

*The Scotsman.*

**pair of spectacles, to make a.** To make no score in two innings, as at cricket: in allusion to the shape of the "O."

**pair of stairs.** A flight of stairs or the rooms on the floor to which they lead.

That Nightingale should procure him either the Ground Floor or the two *Pair of Stairs*.

FIELDING *Tom Jones* XIV, vi.

**pakeha.** [New Zealand.] A foreigner; hence, a white man.—**pakeha Maori.** A white man who turns Maori; also, a child of mixed European and Maori parentage.

**palabras.** [Sp.] Mere words; verbosity. corrupted in Scottish to **palaver**.

Comparisons are odorous: *palabras*, neighbor Verges

SHAKESPEARE *Much Ado About Nothing* act iii, sc. 4.

**Palatinate, the.** An electorate of the Holy Roman Empire including the Upper Palatinate, part of Bavaria, and the Lower or Rhine Palatinate, divided chiefly among Bavaria, Baden, Hesse, and Prussia. The name is retained as a general geographical designation.

**Palatine, the, or the Palatine Hill.** The central hill of the seven on which ancient Rome was built, and the traditional seat of the earliest Roman settlement.

**palaver.** [Scot.] Idle talk; flattery; cajolery. Hence, **palaverer, a flatterer.**

There hang their mighty work forever, high above the reach of any *palaverer*.

HOWELL *Venetian Life* xxii.

**pale.** An enclosed region or district; hence, any boundary or limit.—the English pale. That varying portion of Irish territory over which alone the Anglo-Normans held sway for several centuries after their invasion of Ireland in the latter part of the 12th century —the pale of settlement. That part of Russia, before the revolution of March 15, 1917, in which the Jews were allowed to reside and from which they were permitted to go only under certain conditions imposed by law. It was first established in 1791—to break or leap the pale. To go beyond bounds; clear the barrier, hence, to go to excess or indulge in excesses.

But, too unruly deer, he *breaks the pale*,

And feeds from home. SHAKESPEARE *Comedy of Errors* act ii, sc. 1.

**pale-faces.** [U. S.] White settlers as distinguished from American Indians.

**palm off.** To pass as genuine or sound something that is fraudulent or impaired.

The Chorus . . . should stand by like fools, that I may *palm* them off with diminutive words Translation of ARISTOPHANES *Acharnians* 21.

**palm, to bear the.** To stand first or highest in esteem; to be victor.

Ye Gods, it doth amaze me,  
A man of such a feeble temper should  
So get the start of the majestic world,  
And bear the palm alone

SHAKESPEARE *Julius Cæsar* act i, sc. 2.

**palm to, to give the.** To recognize as a victor, a superior; award the honors to.

Having discussed the subject of nationality and love, Mr Finck gives the palm without hesitation to American love *Literary World* Aug 25, 1887

**palm-grease or oil.** Money taken as a bribe. Compare GREASE THE PALM.

The police . . . were extortionate in their demands for *palm greasing*.

BARING-GOULD *Court Royal* I, iv, 56.

The rich may escape with whole skins, but those without *palm-oil* have scant mercy. *The Nineteenth Century* London, Aug 1892, p. 312.

**Palmetto State.** South Carolina; hence, **Palmetto boys.** The palmetto figures on the arms and on the great seal of the State.

March on, march on, brave *Palmetto boys*,  
Sumter and Lafayette, forward in order

*War Song, Charleston Mercury*, 1861.

**pan, to savor of the.** To betray one's origin; also, to suggest or smack of heresy.

A work of Æneas Sylvius, In the which . . . there be many things that savoureth of the pan. RIDLEY in *Bradford's Writ* (Parker Soc.) II, 160.

**Pandora's box.** A source of misery. Pandora was a beautiful woman, creature of the gods, sent to earth in revenge for Prometheus's theft of fire from heaven. She brought with her a box Jupiter gave her, whence escaped all human ills, delusive hope alone remaining.

The eighteenth century was a skeptical century, in which little word there is a whole *Pandora's Box* of miseries CARLYLE *Heroes* v, 268.

**pandowdy.** [U. S., Chiefly New England] A pudding made of apples and bread-dough, sweetened preferably with molasses, and boiled.

**panel.** A woman of loose morals; a harlot.

*Panels* march by two and three

Saying, sweetheart come with me HALL *Old Lincolnshire Ballad*.

—**panel-den, panel-house.** A house of prostitution and theft combined —**panel-dodge, panel-game.** The practises of a panel-thief

The *panel dodge* is common throughout the East—a man found in the house of another is helpless BURTON *Thousand Nights* I, 323.

—**panel-thief.** A thief in a panel-house who enters a room through a sliding panel and commits robbery.

**panhandle.** I. *n.* [U. S.] A narrow prolongation of a State's territory roughly resembling, in its relation to the whole, a handle to a pan. West Virginia, Texas and Idaho have panhandles. II. *v.* [U. S.] To beg —**panhandler.** A beggar on the highway, especially one who thrusts out his hand aggressively as if holding out a pan for alms.

**panhas.** [U. S.] A dish made by boiling meal or flour in the broth in which hog's liver and pieces of pork for meat pudding (or the pudding itself) have been boiled: sliced cold and fried.

**Panjandrum, the Grand or Great.** 1. Originally, a phrase coined by Samuel Foote, in some nonsense lines written to test the memory of the actor Macklin.

There were present the Pieninnies, and the Jobhilles, and the Garyulies and the *Grand Panjandrum* himself, with the little round button at top, and they all fell to playing the game of catch as catch can, till the gunpowder ran out at the heel of their boots.

FOOTE *The Quarterly Review* xcv 516, 517 (1854)

2. A high and mighty or pompous personage 3. An imaginary or mysterious personage making great pretensions

"Well no, not exactly a nobleman." "Well, some kind of a *Panjandrum*. Hasn't he got one of their titles?"

HENRY JAMES in *Harper's Mag.* lxxvii 86.

4. A village squire; a local magnate 5. Ado, fuss, or formality

**pan out.** [U. S.] To produce; develop: from the process in placer-mining.

The gold is finally recovered by careful washing, or "*panning out*," in a smaller pan.

*Encyclopædia Britannica*

He never could understand that eternal sinkin' of a shaft, and never *pannin'* out anything.

MARK TWAIN *Roughing It* LXI

**pants.** [Trade Cant.] 1. Trousers; pantaloons. an abbreviation. By extension, underdrawers.

*Pants* and shirts sell rather freely.

*The Daily News* London, Nov 8, 1880.

Gent and *pants*—let these words go together like the things they signify. The one always wears the other

RICHARD GRANT WHITE *Words and their Uses*. 211.

2. Knickerbockers as worn by women, especially in rural life, walking, riding, etc. Formerly, *Bloomers*.

**pap.** The fees of public office; also, formerly, political patronage.—to give **pap with a hatchet**. To do or say a kind thing in a brusque and ungracious manner

They give us *pap* with a spoon before we can speake, and when we speake for that wee love, *pap with a hatchet*

LYLY'S *Court Comedies*, Z 126.

**paper.** A free pass, or free passes generally, for an entertainment whether musical, theatrical or screen; also, the dead heads or people in a place of entertainment who have not paid for their seats.

The house was only half-full and there were whispers that a good deal of *paper* was about.

G. R. SIMS *Zeph* 84.

**paper baron, paper lord.** [Scot.] One who holds the title only by a personally limited appointment, as a judge bearing the title of lord, a lord mayor, a lord of the Admiralty.

**paper, commercial.** [Finance.] Negotiable bills of exchange and promissory notes.

**paper-stainer.** [Brit.] An author of indifferent ability.

**par<sup>1</sup>.** Parity; equality of value.—at **par.** At face value; said of bonds or other securities when purchasable at the price for which they were issued or capitalized. Securities are usually **above** or **below par**.

He (George II) gave Englishmen no conquests, but he gave them peace and ease and freedom, the three per cents. nearly *at par*, and wheat at five and six and twenty shillings the quarter.

THACKERAY *Four Georges*.

**par<sup>2</sup>.** Paragraph.

**paralyzed.** Intoxicated; drunk.

**pard.** [Brit.] A leopard.

**pard, pardner.** [U. S. Colloq.] A partner: originating in mining-camps and widely used jocularly.

**paring-bee.** [U. S.] A gathering for the paring of an apple crop in order to dry or preserve it.

A *paring-bee* is a gathering of jolly boys and girls at a farm-house, to pare, quarter, core, and string apples for drying. *Knickerbocker Magazine* Jan. 1850, xxxv, 24

**pari passu.** [L.] With equal pace or movement; at an equal rate of progress; side by side; simultaneously and equally.

The only method of describing *pari passu* was that adopted by Mr. John Bright . . . when he said that, when people were content with a *pari passu* progress, it was like driving six omnibuses abreast down Park Lane

GLADSTONE Speech in the *House of Commons* Feb. 19, 1890.

**Paris garden.** A bear-garden in Southwark, London, near the Globe Theater. Named from Robert de Paris who dwelt there in the 14th century.

You'll leave your noise anon, ye rascals. Do you take the court for *Paris garden*?  
Ye rude slaves  
SHAKESPEARE *Henry VIII* act v, sc. 3.

**parish, on the.** [Brit.] Dependent on the charity of the parish, or provided for out of the poor-rates.

**parish-lantern.** [Brit.] The moon.

The link-boy's natural hatred of the *parish lantern*, which would deprive him of his livelihood.

J. ASHTON *Eighteenth Century Warfs* 235. Note.

**parish top.** A large top kept in every village to be whipped in frosty weather so that the villagers might be kept warm by the exercise.

He's a coward and a coysrill that will not drink to my niece till his brains turn o' the toe like a *parish top*  
SHAKESPEARE *Twelfth Night* act i, sc. 3.

**park.** To collect or mass together, especially in an enclosure for safety, as motor-cars, wagons, artillery, etc.

**parliamentary train.** [Eng.] A railway-train required by act of Parliament to run at least once a day both ways between fixed points, charging third-class passengers not more than a penny a mile.

**parlous.** Uncertain; dangerous; as, these are *parlous* times: used colloquially for amazing.

A *parlous* boy!—go to, you are too shrewd.

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act iii, sc. 2.

**parole system.** [U. S.] A system whereby prisoners, as a reward for good conduct, may obtain liberty, subject to certain restrictions, before the expiration of their sentences.

**parrot, parroteer.** A talkative person, especially one given to repeating something he does not understand.

Mere *parroteers* of what they have learnt.

MILL *Autobiog.* 31.

**parson's nose.** See under NOSE.

**part** occurs with various senses in the following idiomatic phrases:—**for my part.** So far as I am concerned.—**in good or ill part.** With a good or bad grace.—**in part.** Partly.—**part and parcel.** An essential constituent.—**to take part.** To assist or participate.—**to take part with.** To side or cooperate with.—**to take the part of.** To side with; support; back up

**Parthian arrow, dart, shaft, or shot.** A missile discharged in flight or retreat after the manner of the Parthians, figuratively, a parting thrust or shot.

**particular, in.** Particularly; especially; as, something *in particular*.—**London particular** [Eng.]. A London fog.—**to go into particulars.** To give a minute or detailed description or recital.



**Partington, Mrs.** 1. An anecdotal character of Sidmouth, England, who attempted to stem the incoming tide of the Atlantic ocean with a mop during a great storm in 1824, and referred to by Sydney Smith in a speech delivered at Taunton, England, in 1831, to point out the futility of the opposition of the House of Lords to the reform movement

I do not mean to be disrespectful, but the attempt of the lords to stop the progress of reform reminds me very forcibly of the great storm of Sidmouth, and the conduct of the excellent *Mrs Partington* on that occasion

In the midst of this sublime storm, Dame Partington, who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house with mop and pattens, trundling her mop, squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean The Atlantic was roused, Mrs Partington's spirit was up; but I need not tell you that the contest was unequal The Atlantic beat Mrs Partington She was excellent at a slop or puddle, but should never have meddled with a tempest.

SYDNEY SMITH *Speech at Taunton, England* (1831).

2. A character noted for her laughable misuse of words in many sketches by B. P. Shillaber, an American humorist. He published the first of Mrs Partington's sayings in the *Boston Post*, in 1847.

As *Mrs. Partington* would say, they might all three have been twins

BESANT AND RICE *Ready Money Mortiboy* XXX.

**parti pris.** Prejudice. Side taken, mind made up, bias.

Lady Dolly scanned the garment with a critical air and *parti pris*

QUIDA *Moths* i, 60.

**partlet.** A garment covering the throat and bust, worn frequently ruffled by women; hence, jocularly, a woman. In early times, from the ruff of feathers found on the necks of certain breeds of fowls and used to designate a hen

*Partlet*, an old kind of band, both for men and women; a loose collar, a woman's ruff

DUNTON'S *Ladies' Dictionary*, 1694

SHAKESPEARE I *Henry IV*, act iii, sc 3

**parts.** Components or qualities of mind or character; intellectual gifts or faculties; talent.

Men of great *parts* are often unfortunate in the management of public business, because they are apt to go out of the common road by the quickness of their imagination.

SWIFT *Works, Thoughts on Various Subjects* 519

**party.** A person, an individual. See quotation The term is more acceptable when used in the plural

*Party.* Formerly common and in serious use, now shoppy, vulgar, or jocular, the proper word being *person* SIR JAMES A. H. MURRAY *New Eng Dict* vol vii, p. 515

My little woman. . . attends the Evening Exertions of a reverend *party* of the name of Chadband.

DICKENS *Bleak House* XXII.

**pass**, in its various senses, is used in a number of idiomatic phrases.—to

**pass a dividend.** To fail to declare and pay a dividend when due or when usually paid —to **pass a name.** [London Stock Exchange] To pass among

the intermediaries of a stock transaction a ticket bearing the name of the buyer and the consideration of purchase in order to allow the actual transfer of the stock to be made direct to the holder of the ticket —to **pass beyond.** To go further than; exceed the limits of, surpass, excel —to **pass by.** 1. To move past, figuratively, to ignore, elapse 2. To be known by some name other than one's own —to **pass**

**in one's checks or chips.** [U. S.] To deliver one's checks to the banker for settlement at the close of a game of cards, as poker Hence, to go to one's last reckoning, die —to **pass into.** To become, suffer change or gradual change into —to **pass muster.**

To bear inspection; be accepted or approved

Even the exhibition given by J. L. Sullivan, the American champion, in the City Hall, Glasgow, on Monday evening, in presence of three thousand spectators, *may pass muster*

ST ANDREWS' *Citizen* 1888.

—to **pass off.** 1. To give out or circulate as genuine, palm off, as, to *pass off* a counterfeit 2. To run its course, go off, as, the occasion *passed off* pleasantly 3. To be thrown off, exhale or exude; issue, as, *passing off* in the form of vapor —to **pass**

**on.** To proceed, go on, elapse — **to pass one's word.** To make a definite or binding promise, promise formally — **to pass over.** 1. To go across, as, to *pass over* a course. 2. To let go by without notice, overlook, as, to *pass over* an insult — **to pass the summer.** To stay at for the summer months — **to pass upon or on.** 1. To palm off on; impose on by fraud. 2. To examine and decide or give judgment concerning

**passage of or at arms.** A personal encounter; a fight or a dispute, as, a *passage* with swords.

**passing rich.** Surpassingly wealthy.

A man he was to all the country dear, And *passing rich* with forty pounds a year  
GOLDSMITH *Deserted Village* 142.

**Passion-play.** A medieval mystery, miracle-play, or drama representing the Passion of Christ. Especially the decennial representation of this at Oberammergau.

**past.** Out of reach of; beyond the influence or enjoyment of; that can no longer be borne; as, *past* cure; *past* hope; *past* endurance.—**past himself.** [Eng.] Beside himself.

**pasteboard.** A visiting card; a playing card.

**past-master.** One thoroughly proficient in a particular craft or business; one who is experienced in a specific subject or sphere of action. In freemasonry, one who has been master of his lodge.

Marlborough was a *Past-Master* in fluency of speech

WOLSELEY *Life of Marlborough* II, lvi, 117.

**patch** is used idiomatically in **don't put a patch upon it.** Don't make bad worse by trying to excuse it; avoid trying to hide a defect with a patch, as it serves to attract attention to it — **not a patch on.** Not comparable with, so far inferior to as not fit for use as a patch — **Patched up Peace.** 1. The peace treaty between the United States and the German Republican States, reserving to the former all the rights guaranteed by the Treaty of Versailles signed by President Wilson June 28, 1919, that terminated the World War, July 2, 1921. 2. The treaty between Charles IX of France and the Huguenots in 1568, so called from the precipitancy with which it was signed and the lack of confidence in its stability — **purple patch.** A literary passage marked by unusual brilliance of language and style — **to patch up.** 1. To bring about a temporary reconciliation, as, to *patch up* a quarrel

"It was perturbing, assuredly, and it might have served, if Linda hadn't written; that *patched it up*," I said, laughing H JAMES in *Harper's Monthly* Feb 1888

2. To mend, repair, make whole in a hasty, imperfect or temporary manner, as *to patch up* a leaky kettle

**patent inside or outside.** A newspaper sheet on one side of which readable matter is printed the other side being left blank to be filled up by the publisher of the newspaper.

**patent light.** A contrivance consisting of refractive prisms of glass set in metal frames to reflect light from above into rooms, basements, etc.

**paternalism.** The controlling of the business or the social and personal affairs of a people by a Government after the manner of a father in dealing with his children, also, the public making of such provision for the public need or convenience as might otherwise be supplied by private enterprise, as, Government *paternalism* meddles with trade and destroys commercial initiative

**patience of Job.** Long-suffering endurance or fortitude in great adversity, as that endured by Job as related in the Biblical book bearing his name.

You would provoke the *patience of Job*.

FIELDING *Tom Jones* X, viii.

**patience on a monument.** Calm endurance to the point of that immovability which is typified by a statue on a pedestal

I cannot away with your pale cheeks and that *Patience-on-a-Monument* kind of look  
HENLEY & STEVENSON *Three Plays, Beau Austin* act 1, sc. 2

**Patrimony of St. Peter or of the Church.** The States of the Church or the territory over which the Pope reigns as a temporal prince, embracing the Vatican, the Lateran, and the Castel Gandolfo. Formerly the Papal States, which embraced a large part of Italy.

In a really Christian country the *Patrimony of the Church* would be left untouched  
BUCKLE *Hist. Civil* III, ii, 89.

**Patrons of Husbandry.** An organization, designed to promote the interests of farmers and to bring producers and consumers nearer together. It originated in 1867, and has been a powerful factor in politics.

The farmers of the Northwest formed agricultural associations, called *Patrons of Husbandry*, or popularly *Granges* BRYCE *Am. Commonwealth* vol. II, pt. vi, p. 509

**patroon.** [U. S.] A landholder whose title was received from the Dutch Governors of the province of New Netherlands, which was subsequently confirmed by the English

General Van Rensselaer is the *Patroon*, or Lord of the Manor, and is considered the greatest landlord in the United States  
ANDREW REED *Visit to America* I, 323

**Paul Pry.** An intrusive and inquisitive meddler. from a comedy by John Poole; also, the inquisitive meddling title-character, who always enters a house or a room with the apology, "I hope I don't intrude."

**pave the way for.** To make ready for, prepare for.

This favorite satire ["Reynard the Fox"] contributed to *pave the way* for the Reformation  
I D'ISRAËLI *Amenities of Lit., Books of the People* I, 300.

**pay**, in various senses, is used in several idiomatic phrases.—**pay court to.** Show or offer attentions to, court the favor of; make love to—**pay dirt, pay streak.** [U. S.] In mining, ore, gravel or soil rich enough in minerals to make working it profitable—**pay one's way.** To meet expenses and keep out of debt, to meet one's obligations on the nail—**pay out.** To requite for an injury, give deserved punishment to, chastise, to get rid of by paying.

The man in possession had been *paid out* D. C. MURRAY *Old Blazer's Hero* IX

—**pay the debt of nature.** To die

The slender *debt to nature's* quickly paid

QUARLES *Emblems*

—**those who dance must pay the piper.** Those who indulge themselves must bear the consequences

**peace at any price.** [Brit. Politics] A group of pacifistic politicians of the late Victorian period who opposed war.

Though not a "*peace-at-any-price*" man, I am not ashamed to say that I am a *peace at almost any price* man

LUBBOCK *Use of Life* XI, 165

—**to hold one's peace.** To remain silent, keep quiet—to **keep the peace.** To refrain from violation of the public peace

Keep *peace* upon your lives, he dies that strikes again

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act II, sc. 2.

—**to swear the peace.** To make oath before a magistrate that a certain person should be bound to keep the peace

An Irishman, *swearing the peace* against his three sons for assaulting and abusing him, made this proper reservation

GREELEY in *Zabriskie's Horace Greeley* 264

**peach**, *n.* [Slang, U. S.] A delightfully pleasant person, or something out of the ordinary, as in excellence, severity, etc., used in such phrases as **a peach of a cold** (a severe cold); **a peach of a time** (a delightful time).

**peach**, *v.* To inform on; betray; hence, **peacher**, an informer.

**peanut politics.** [U. S. Politics.] Paltry, mean, or underhand politics; hence, **peanut politician**, one who practises peanut politics.

They used to talk about *peanut politics* at Albany, but a peanut is too large and respectable an object to yield a comparison for yesterday's action of the State Senate  
*The Evening Post* New York, Feb. 4, 1909.

**pearl diver.** [U. S.] A dishwasher, as in a restaurant.

**pearls before swine.** (*Matthew* vii, 6). See under **CAST**.

**peart.** Sprightly; joyous; fresh; healthy: a variant of *pert* which is no longer used in these senses.

She expressed her opinion that I must feel right *peart* to be out that early

E. W. FARNHAM *Life in Prairie Land* 26.

**peat.** A frail girl; a pampered pet.

Of a little thing,

You are a pretty *peat*, indifferent fair too

MASSINGER *The Maid of Honor* act ii, sc. 2.

**pecker.** [Brit.] The mouth; the upper lip; hence, courage; resolution; especially in the phrase, **keep your pecker up**, keep a stiff upper lip; keep up your courage.

**peep.** To utter the shrill sound common to young birds, mice, and some kinds of frogs; hence, to disclose, as a secret.

No one has ever *peeped* or muttered.

W. PHILLIPS *Speeches* VI, 136.

**peep of dawn, day, or morning.** The beginning of day; early morning; dawn.

Of't we have seen him at the *peep of dawn*.

GRAY *Elegy* 98.

**peeper.** [Brit.] An eye: used chiefly in the phrase, **close one's peepers**, hit one in the eyes.

An understanding as much awry and distorted as his two *peepers*

SHEBBEARE *Lydia* II, 181.

**Peeping Tom.** An over-inquisitive person; a Paul Pry or pruriently prying person, especially one who peeps in at windows: from **Peeping Tom of Coventry**, an inquisitive tailor who peeped at Lady Godiva during her ride through Coventry and was struck blind. Lady Godiva was the wife of Leofric, Earl of Mercia, England, and according to tradition so as to secure the repeal of an oppressive tax placed by her husband on the citizens of Coventry

She shook her head

And shower'd rippled ringlets to her knee.

Unclad herself in haste

Then she rode forth, clothed on with chastity.

TENNYSON *Godiva*.

**peevish.** Childish; trifling; irritated; annoyed; disgruntled.

What a wretched and *peevish* fellow is this king of England, to mope with his fat-brain'd followers so far out of his knowledge

SHAKESPEARE *Henry V* act iii, sc. 7.

**peg.** [Anglo-Ind.] Brandy, or whisky and soda.

Brandy and belattee pawnee [soda water], a beverage which goes by the name of a *peg* (according to the favourite derivation, because each draught is a *peg* in your coffin)

TREVELYAN *Comptel. Wallah* 158

**peg away.** To strive to accomplish something with steady, persistent effort; work unremittingly like one who drives pegs into shoes; persevere.

They, on their parts, waived all ceremony, and *pegged away* at the sausages and potatoes.

T. HUGHES *Tom Brown at Rugby* I, 131.

**peg out.** To die.

Better fun than *pegging out* with only the sooty-faced niggers prodding away at you

MITFORD *Romance Cape Frontier* II, xv.

**pell-mell.** With headlong rush, in a confused or promiscuous manner; indiscriminately.

After whom, with an interval of two furlongs, the remaining host followed *pell mell*.  
GROTE *Hist. Greece* II, xxviii, 34.

**pelt.** I. *n.* 1. Hurry; hence, to go **pelt** or **at full pelt**, to go as fast as may be.

The clerk ran home to Camden town as hard as he could *pelt*  
DICKENS *Christmas Carol*.

2. Skin, as in the phrase, "I'm after your *pelt*."

3. A tremendous rage

The letter which put you into such a *pelt* came from another *Wrangling Lovers* 1677.

II. *v.* 1. To be in a tremendous rage 2. To submit easily.

I found the people nothing prest to *pelt*,  
To yeeld, or hostage give, or tributes pay. *Mirror Magazine* p. 166.

3. To fall heavily, as rain or snow.

**pelting.** Despicable, paltry.

From low farms,

Poor *pelting* villages, sheepcotes, and mills

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act ii, sc. 3.

**Pennsylvania Dutch.** 1. The descendants of the early German and Swiss emigrants. 2. The High German dialect spoken by them, and the dialectal English current in the community.

A young housekeeper wished to procure butter from the crossroads storekeeper, and the conversation was as follows:

"Got butter, hain't?" "Who says I hain't?"

"I ain't sayin' you hain't hain't, but hain't you has?"

Quoted by DR F A CLEVELAND in *The Philadelphia Ledger*.

**penny dreadful.** [Brit.] A newspaper which features crimes, divorce-court proceedings, outrages, and other sensational news; also, a novellette of sensational character. Compare DREADFUL.

The wicked nobleman of the transpontine melodrama or of *penny dreadfuls*

EDMUND YATES *The World* London, Aug 20, 1884.

**penny for your thoughts, a.** What you are thinking of I would give a penny to know said usually to one who seems to be deep in thought.

Come, a *penny for your thought* It is not worth a farthing, for I was thinking of you  
SWIFT *Polite Conversation* I.

**penny gaff.** [Brit.] A low-class music-hall or theater.

There are shops which have been turned into a kind of temporary theatre (admission one penny). . . . These places are called by the costers *Penny Gaffs*

MATHEW *London Labor* I, 40.

**penny horrible.** A penny dreadful.

**Pennyroyal District.** [U. S.] Western Kentucky, as distinguished from the Blue Grass and the Mountains, which constitute the remaining popular divisions.

**penny silver, to think one's.** To have a good opinion of oneself.

Believe me, though she say that she is fairest, *I think my penny silver*, by her leave  
GREENE AND LODGE *Looking-Glass for London* 123

**penny soul never came to twopence.** A mean-souled character never reached success.

**penny wise and pound foolish.** Thrifty in small things, and careless or wasteful in large ones.

If by covetousnesse or negligence, one withdraw from them their ordinary foodde, he shall be *penny wise, and pound foolish*, that is, suffer a great losse in his cattel for sawing from them a little meat  
TOPSELL *Four-footed Beasts* 609

**pension.** [F.] A boarding-house or a boarding-school.—**en pension.**

[Can.] A system, derived from the French, of payment for board and lodging in which the guest pays a lump sum per week for lodging, service, and meals.

**pep.** [U. S.] Vim, punch; sprightliness; snap; vigor.

What the Americans have really done for us is, perhaps, best expressed in their own idiom. They have put *pep* into us. They have given to us and to the French of their *pep*, and we know now that we can not lose this war.

KING GEORGE V of England, quoted in *The New York Times* Aug. 29, 1918.

**pepper-and-salt.** 1. A cloth of mixed gray and black or white and black closely intermingled.

Bring me six yards of a Cloth I saw . . . that is called *pepper-and-salt*

LADY M COKE *Journal*, Oct. 28, 1774

2. [U. S.] A plant, the harbinger of spring (*Eriogonum bulbosum*), with white petals and dark anthers.

**pepper-box.** 1. An irascible or quick-tempered person. 2. An early type of revolver, in which there was a separate barrel for each chamber.

**peppercorn rent.** [Brit. Law] A nominal rent; originally, a feudal acknowledgment of leasehold by giving a *peppercorn* annually to the lord of the manor.

In modern times building leases sometimes reserve a *peppercorn* as rent for the first few years.

*Encyclopedia of the Laws of England* 8 v.

**perdu.** A scout, skirmisher or a sniper, any soldier on a dangerous post or engaged in a very hazardous enterprise. Hence, one who is in a desperate condition.

To watch, poor *perdu*,  
With this thin helm

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear*, act iv, sc. 7.

**perge.** To proceed.

*Perge*, master Holofernes, *perge*

SHAKESPEARE *Love's Labor's Lost* act iv, sc. 2.

**pernickety.** [Scots] Precise about trifles, difficult to please; fussy; fidgety, particular, fastidious, disagreeable.

This I say for the benefit of those who otherwise might not understand what *pernickety* creatures astronomers are

*Popular Science Monthly* XXVI, 52.

Awful *pernickety* folk as they are on the Shire side

S. R. CROCKETT *Kit Kennedy* 54.

**per saltum.** By a leap, without intermediate degrees; at one bound: as, he was ordained priest *per saltum*.

In hopes to be made saints *per saltum*.

J. GOODMAN *Penit* Part II, i, 151.

**per se.** [L.] By itself, himself, or herself; simply as such, of its own nature.

The public are swindled out of their money (by the sale of patent medicines), was held libellous *per se*

95 *Wisconsin* 164.

**persimmon.** [U. S.] A tree that produces a plum-like fruit, especially in the Southern States.—**not a huckleberry to a persimmon.**

Not a penny to a pound—the longest pole knocks the persimmon. The best equipped person achieves success—to rake in the persimmons. To gather the spoils, pocket the stakes, reap the reward

**person, in.** Individually; with bodily presence; not through a deputy.

In law, by one's own act.

**perspective.** An optical illusion.

One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons,  
A natural *perspective*, that is and is not

SHAKESPEARE *Twelfth Night* act v, sc. 1.

**pesky.** [U. S.] Troublesome, plaguy, vexatious.

**Peter Funk.** [U. S.] One who conducts a mock auction or makes fictitious bids at such an auction.

No distinctions of dress mark the different classes . . . You don't know whether the person sitting next you is a Prime Minister or a *Peter Funk* auctioneer

G A SALA *Diary in America* II, 203.

**peter out.** To be exhausted, give out, cease to produce or yield; fail.

**petticoat.** A woman.—**in petticoats.** 1. In the guise of a woman.

Beatrice Cenci is . . . none other than . . . Shelley himself *in petticoats*

KINGSLEY *Shelley and Byron* I, 321

2. Still in the nursery, as a child in skirts —**petticoat government.** Government by women

Wilhelmus submitted at home to a species of government neither laid down in Aristotle nor Plato, in short, it partook of the nature of a pure, unmixed tyranny, *petticoat government*

IRVING *Knickerbocker* IV, 216

**petto, in.** Within one's own breast, to oneself.—**cardinal in petto.** A cardinal who has been appointed but whose appointment has not yet been formally announced.

There are seven Cardinals still remaining *in petto*, whose names the Pope keeps secret

*The London Gazette* No 5015

**pet, to take the.** To take offense unnecessarily; be peevishly sulky; be irritated at or by.

About a year ago I took the *pet* at my Diary

SCOTT *Journal* May 23, 1830

**pew.** A seat in a church, hence [Brit.], a place of business or one's abode.

Formerly, a box in a theater —**in the right church but in the wrong pew.** [U. S.] In the proper place but in the wrong department, correct as to the main facts but wrong in the details

**Pharaoh.** One of the ancient Egyptian monarchs.—**Pharaoh's beans or pence.** Mummified foraminifers found in the stones of pyramids.

—**Pharaoh's chicken.** The Egyptian vulture—**Pharaoh's corn.** Mummy-wheat so called because grown from seed found in mummy cases —**Pharaoh's lean kine.** A long, lean person

One who looks as though he had run away from a bone house, or as if he were walking about to save his funeral expenses

FARMER AND HENLEY *Slang and its Analogues*

—**Pharaoh's rat.** The ichneumon —**Pharaoh's worm.** The guinea-worm—a thread-like worm of tropical Africa and Asia sometimes 6 feet long injurious to man

**Philadelphia lawyer.** [U. S.] An unusually astute, long-headed, and far-sighted lawyer. See quotation

You do him an injustice in calling him sharp, and the defense of unruly British seamen is but petty criminal practice to which no particular credit ought to attach. The story is a bigger and more significant one than that, for it forms one of the pillars of our Temple of Freedom in America

If you will turn to Volume II of John Fiske's, "The Dutch and Quaker Colonies in America," at page 290 et seq., you will read the interesting story of John Peter Zenger, the Albany newspaper publisher, of his indictment for criminal libel, and of his successful defense by Andrew Hamilton, *Philadelphia lawyer*, in the year 1735. But there is far more in the matter than the able and successful defense of the German publisher Hamilton established for all time the principles of a free press and free speech to which the law of libel should be forever subservient. The case was epoch-making

The phrase a *Philadelphia lawyer*, as we here in Philadelphia understand it, means a lawyer who is long-headed, far-sighted and able, certainly not sharp

JOSEPH CARSON of Philadelphia in *Letter to the Librarian of The Literary Digest*, April 1, 1922

The New England folks have a saying that three *Philadelphia lawyers* are a match for the very devil himself

*Salem Observer* March 13, 1824

**Philadelphia treat.** [U. S.] A treat in which everyone pays his own score; a Dutch treat.

**philander.** To play at courtship with a woman.

'Tis no question of sighing and *philandering* between a nobleman of his Grace's age and a girl who hath little of that softness in her nature

THACKERAY *Henry Esmond* vol. II, p. 69.

**philanderer.** A male-flirt; one who devotes himself to playing at courtship.

**Philip drunk to Philip sober, to appeal from.** To urge the reconsideration of a matter on which a hasty decision has been given. From Philip, King of Macedon, father of Alexander, referred to in Valerius Maximus (lib. vi, c. 2) *Externa* 1: *Provocarem ad Philippum, sed sobrium.*

Valerius gives this as the appeal of a woman and a foreigner against judgment pronounced by Philip, king of Macedon, when he was intoxicated. The appeal was allowed, and when the king recovered his senses the judgment was reversed. Hence the common phrase, *To appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober*

WALSH *Encyc. of Quotations* p. 206.

If they had any fault to find, let them go to her, which was not even *appealing from Philip drunk to Philip sober*, but from the honesty in the jungle to the honesty in the cave

MRS E. LYNN LINTON *Paston Carver* 1

**Philistia.** A plain on the Mediterranean, in southwestern Palestine (see *Psalms* lx, 8); the land of commonplace unenlightenment; hence, a **Philistine**, a narrow-minded, ignorant person indifferent to art and letters.

**philosopher's stone.** A substance sought by alchemists which they believed had the property of transmuting the baser metals into gold or to be a cure for various ills.

**pi.** Any confused mass; a mess; especially, a mass of type that has been dropped or confused by accident. sometimes written **pie**.

Your arrangements going all rapidly to *pie* CARLYLE *French Revolution* II, II, iv.

**picayune.** Anything small or of little value; from the Spanish half-real circulated in the provinces of Louisiana and the Floridas.

The infernal *picayune* spirit in which it is published has broken my heart

HORACE GREELEY in *Greeley or Lincoln* 127

**Piccadilly.** A well-known street in London, believed to have derived its name from the *piccadell* or *pickadill*, an ornamental border on a garment.

That famous ordinary near St. James's, called Pickadilly, took denomination from this, that one Higgins, a taylor, who built it, got most of his estate by *piccadilles*, which in the last age were much in fashion

BLOUNT *Glossographia*

Farewell, my dearest *Piccadilly*,

Notorious for great dinners,

Oh! what a tennis court was there!

Alas! too good for sinners

WIT AND DROLLERY (1682) p. 39.

**pick** is used with varying significance in the following phrases.—**pick-up.**

**I. a. 1.** Hurriedly brought together, scratched up; as, a *pick-up* supper. **2.** Intended (1) to lift, or (2) to gather something, as, *pick-up* tongs, a *pick-up* freight (train), a *pick-up* (electric) brush. **II. n. 1.** A woman whose acquaintance is made in the street, especially, a street-walker. **2.** That which is picked up, as a chance passenger or acquaintance, or a hastily prepared meal of odds and ends—the *pick* of the basket. The choicest of anything—to *pick a bone with*. See under **BONE**—to *pick a hole in one's coat*. To find fault with or defame one's character—to *pick a quarrel*. To seek a quarrel without provocation—to *pick off*. To shoot with deliberate and careful aim and selection

Political riflemen . . . employed in *picking off* place after place, however important & serviceable. *Parliamentary Debates* (1817), 316.



—to **pick on**. To irritate or tease with petty carping or fault-finding, select for banter or chaff, often interrogatively as, "Why *pick on* me?"—to **pick out**. 1. To take out by picking, make a selection 2. To distinguish from the surroundings as with the eye 3. To recover the notes of (a tune) so as to reproduce it by ear 4. To gather the meaning of (obscure or confused words or facts) from detached and scattered data —to **pick the flint**. Formerly, to freshen the striking surface of a gun-flint to insure ignition now used figuratively, as, to *pick* one's *flint* and try again —to **pick to pieces**. To tear apart, damage or destroy, hence, to subject to close and unfavorable analysis

They'll *pick you to pieces* a little among themselves TROLLOPE *He Knew* lxxxi  
—to **pick up**. 1. To get or acquire here and there, as opportunity offers, or little by little, as, to *pick up* rare paintings, to *pick up* a subsistence 2. To fall in with, especially in the way of assistance or salvage, as, to *pick up* a derelict 3. To regain something considered as lost, as, I lost thirty pounds through sickness, but am now *picking up* 4. To break ground with a pick, to dig out by picking 5. To receive an overtaken person or thing into one's company, or into a vehicle or vessel, said, also, of a vehicle or vessel 6. To find again, regain, or catch sight of, as a lost path, a trail, a rifle range, etc 7. To make a casual acquaintance or get into an informal conversation 8. To take heart again, recover spirit 9. [U S] To make a room tidy.

**picked**. Fimically dressed; dressed up.

He is too *picked*, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it SHAKESPEARE *Love's Labor's Lost* act v, sc 1.

**pickle**. A plight, an unpleasant or disagreeable position.

How comest thou in this *pickle*?

SHAKESPEARE *The Tempest* act v, sc 1.

**pickle, to have a rod in**. To have a punishment ready to administer when occasion offers, from the old practise of soaking rods in brine to toughen them.

I fear God *hath* worse *rods* in *pickell* for you B SPENSER *Vox Civitatis* 26.

**pick-me-up**. A stimulating beverage, especially, a cocktail; a tonic.

This man is in constant need of moral support and *pick-me-up*

MAX ORELL *A Frenchman in America* 43.

**pickthank**. A fawner; sycophant

Which oft the ear of greatness needs must hear,—

By smiling *pick-thanks* and base newsmongers

SHAKESPEARE *I Henry IV* act. iii, sc. 2

**Pickwickian**. Relating to or characteristic of Mr. Pickwick, a word used in the debates of the Pickwick Club, as described by Dickens, to explain away unparliamentary language.

In every case it had only a political, perhaps I might say a *Pickwickian* meaning

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN *Speech* at Birmingham, Nov. 17, 1902.

—in a **Pickwickian sense**. In a conveniently idiosyncratic or peculiarly constructive sense

The Chairman felt it his imperative duty to demand whether he had used the expression in a common sense Mr Blotton had no hesitation in saying that he had not—he had used the word in its *Pickwickian* sense CHARLES DICKENS *Pickwick* i.

**picture** is used with varying significance in the following phrases.—a **living picture**. A speaking likeness; one who so closely resembles another as to be a likeness or exact reproduction of her or him—a **picture**. One who or that which is very beautiful, as, the young woman is a *picture*; the hat that she wears is of itself a *picture*—**living picture**. A picture formed by grouping a number of silent and motionless persons suitably attired so as to reproduce the figures in a famous painting —**not in the picture**. Out of harmony, inappropriate—**picture hat**. A large hat adorned with plumes or feathers in imitation of the hats worn by persons whose portraits were painted by Joshua Reynolds or Gainsborough —the **pictures**. [Brit.] Motion-pictures, the movies, the cinematograph, hence, **picture palace**, a motion-picture theater

**pidgin-English**. An artificial dialect or jargon of English intermixed with Chinese, Portuguese, and Malay words, expressed in Chinese

idiom Used in Chinese and other commercial cities of the Far East in the ordinary intercourse of natives and foreigners. By extension the jargon employed by the British in dealing with the aborigines of Africa and Australia.

The Chinese, not being able to pronounce the word business, call it "bigoon," which has degenerated into "*pi-goon*." BERNCASTLE *Voyage China* II, 65.

**pie.** Something good, feasible or pleasant; anything easy of achievement.

He is *pie* for the cartoonist.

Westminster Gazette June 16, 1902.

—**gooseberry-pie.** [Oxford Univ.] Late dinners or suppers — **to have a finger in the pie.** See under **FINGER.**

**pie, pye.** The book of rules for solemnizing the offices of the pre-Reformation Church; so called by the English possibly because it was *pie*d or vari-colored.

The *pie* was the table used before the Reformation to find out the service for the day.  
Hook Church Dict 585.

—**In spite of the pie.** Stubbornly

Pertinax in rem aliquam, that is fully bent to do a thing, that will do it, yea marie will hee, maugre or *in spite of the pie* WITHERS' *Dictionary* (ed 1608) p 390.

**pie** in its various senses occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases.—**a piece of.** Somewhat of; partaking of the nature or character of; a bit of, as, *a piece of a man*, *a piece of a scholar* —**by the piece.** At the rate of so much a piece or at so much remuneration for a definite amount of work, as, payment or purchase *by the piece* —**in pieces** 1. Separated, broken, at odds 2. Into bits; apart —**lettering-piece.** A strip of leather used by bookbinders to fill a panel on the back of a volume and receive the title —**of a piece.** 1. Of the same kind, sort, or class 2. Of one piece, undivided —**on pieces.** Into pieces —**on the piece.** At piece-work —**pie piece.** [Austral.] (Wool Trade) A remnant of a skin, a piece which the puller has cut off —**piece-broker.** One who deals in remnants of cloth purchased from tailors —**piece by piece.** Gradually, little by little —**piece-goods.** Dry-goods usually sold by the piece, as shirts and sheetings —**piece-hall.** A building used as an exchange or salesroom for piece-goods —**piece-labor.** Piece-work —**piece-liquor.** Hot water placed under the false bottom of the mash-tub in brewing. —**piece-market.** [Eng.] A market for piece-goods —**piece-master.** [Eng.] One who distributes piece-work to employees in behalf of the employer —**piece of eight.** A Spanish peso or dollar, worth 8 reals. The figure 8 was formerly marked on it. —**piece-price.** The price paid for piece-work —**piece-wool.** The quantity of assorted woolen yarns required for the manufacture of a certain length and weight of cloth used when dress-goods were woven at home —**piece-work.** Work done or paid for by the piece or quantity —**to give one a piece of one's mind.** To reproach one to his face, tell one plainly what one thinks —**to go all to pieces.**—1. To suffer from physical collapse, break down, have one's nerves overstrained —2. To sustain loss, be ruined financially, be bankrupt —**to piece out.** To complete by adding to, piece by piece, bring to completion imperfectly

The old Pons Emilius has recently been *pieced out* by connecting a suspension bridge with the old piers. HAWTHORNE *French and Italian Notebooks* I, 133.

**pièce de résistance.** [Fr.] The most substantial piece, as the joint at a meal; hence, the most important article or show piece; the principal work of a collection, as of poems or paintings.

The authorized text is a *pièce de résistance* against innovation

JOWETT *Essays and Reviews* 335.

**piffle.** Nonsensical speech or writing; trash, twaddle.—**piffler.** One given to writing or talking nonsense.

**pig** occurs in various senses in some English idioms and idiotisms.—**a pig in a poke.** Something purchased without examination; any goods bought and paid for blindly or without knowing the quality or value of the goods bargained for —**a pig's whisper.** [Brit.] 1. An inaudible whisper 2. A short space of time

You'll find yourself in bed in less than *a pig's whisper*

DICKENS *Pickwick* xxxii

—**a pig to be shaved.** A cynical explanation of the reason for the assembling of a crowd to watch an event of interest —**as happy as a pig in muck.** Contented

in a state of dirt — **pigs and whistles**. Gimmicks, trifles, also, fragments — **to go to pigs and whistles**. To go to waste, to pieces, or to ruin — perhaps in allusion to the ruin or waste that generally attended those persons "licensed to be drunk on the premises" who patronized the "Pig and Whistle" — or village inn under that sign. Sometimes, **to make pigs and whistles of**. See quotation from Mrs Carlyle's "Letters," below.

So he to pigs and whistles went And left the land.

*Har'st Rag* xlviii, 18 as quoted by SIR JAMES A. H. MURRAY in *New Eng Dict* vol vii.

Curious what a curative effect a railway journey has on me always, while you it makes pigs and whistles of!

JANE CARLYLE *Letters* III, 125.

— **pigs in clover**. 1. Uncouth and ill-bred persons unfitted for the position which they have attained round pgs in square holes, parvenus, upstarts. 2. A game that involves the rolling of marbles into holes in a board.

— **pig's whistle**. [U. S.] A very short time, right away.

I'll do so in less than a pig's whistle.

BARTLETT *Dict of Americanisms*.

— **please the pigs**. See under PLEASE — **the pigs ran through it**. Something unexpected happened to prevent the carrying out of the plans — **to be like a pig in a well**. To be without means of support.

A child who has no parents or guardians, or a person who has no visible means of subsistence, is said to be like a pig in a well.

JOSEPH WRIGHT *Eng Dialect Dict* vol IV, p 495.

— **to be like a pig to do no good alive**. To be avaricious, greedy, selfish and covetous, to be eager to get and to keep everything for oneself — **to be on the pig's back**. To be enjoying prosperity — **to bring, call, drive, or take one's pigs to a bad, fine, pretty or wrong market**. To mismanage one's affairs, to have made a mistake in embarking in an enterprise, to suffer disappointment, to sell one's goods at a loss; to carry coals to Newcastle.

The government finds that in producing the competition Wallah, it has driven its pigs to a pretty market.

*Punch* June 21, 1873.

— **to buy a pig in a poke**. To pay for something without examining it, to make a bad bargain — **to drive pigs**. To snore. Sometimes rendered to drive hogs or to drive one's pigs to market.

I gad he fell asleep and snored so loud we thought he was driving his hogs to market.

SWIFT *Polite Conversation* II, 455.

— **to have the pig on one's back**. To suffer from misfortune or ill luck — **to kill one's pig for one**. To spoil one's plans, to cook one's goose — **we don't kill a pig every day**. We do not celebrate or make merry every day, every day is not a holiday.

— **what do you expect from a pig but a grunt**. What do you look for from an ill-bred person but grumbling — **when pigs begin to fly**. When the unexpected happens.

**pigeon**. I. *n.* A simple-minded or unsophisticated person who is easily swindled, a gull or simpleton. II. *v.* To fleece, as by tricks in gambling; swindle out of money.

**pigeons' milk**. A thick milk-like substance present in the crop of pigeons, with which, when regurgitated, they feed their young.

Boys and novices are frequently sent on the first of April to buy pigeon's milk.

*Lex. Balatr.*

**pigsnie, pigsney**. A term of endearment such as might have been used in fond prattle to children by nurses, hence, a beloved child; pet; darling: from the eye of a pig as typical of a small eye, "a dear little eye." In dialectal use now offensive or contemptuous for a woman of easy virtue.

I heard not long since a baby called a darling pigsnie, as a term of affectionate admiration.

*Notes and Queries* 4th Series vi, 196.

**piker**. [U. S.] 1. One who gambles in a small way; one who bets the minimum. 2. [Australian.] A stray or wild steer. 3. [Brit.] A petty thief; pilferer; vagrant, tramp; gypsy. 4. [Eng.] Formerly, a soldier armed with a pike, a pikeman.

**pill.** 1. A disagreeable person; a bore; one who makes himself objectionable. 2. A physician or surgeon—a **bitter** or **hard pill to swallow**. Something that circumstances compel one to accept or that wounds one's pride—to **sugar the pill**. To sweeten so as to make palatable, to gild the pill. See under **GILD**.

**pillar to post, from.** From one place to another.

**pin, in merry.** In jovial mood or good humor. Formerly rendered **on** or **upon the merry pin**.

Dined at Amen Corner . . . Sir John *upon a merry pin*

T. HUTCHINSON *Diary* Oct 7, 1779.

The Calend'rer, right glad to find

His friend *in merry pin*

COWPER *John Gilpin*.

**pinch, at a.** In an emergency; under difficulty; in case of urgency.

[We are] without a cook, but the dairymaid is not a bad hand *at a pinch*

BURKE *Correspondence* III, 89.

**pinch-back, belly, common, fist, or penny.** [Brit.] A parsimonious person; skinflint; miser; niggard.

**pinchbeck.** Showy; sham; brummagen: from Christopher *Pinchbeck*, a London watchmaker who invented an alloy of copper and zinc resembling gold in color.

The greater part of what I once took on trust as precious is really paste and *pinchbeck*

LOWELL *Old English Drama* 128.

**pine, done to.** Put to death; starved to death

Whether he alive be to be found,

Or by some deadly chance *be done to pine*

SPENSER *Faerie Queene* VI, v, 28.

**Pine-tree State.** [U. S.] Maine: so called because of its extensive pine forests.

**pink or pink coat.** [Brit.] A scarlet hunting-coat worn by fox-hunters; also, one who wears such a coat.

They are the hunting set, and come in with pea-coats over their *pinks*

HUGHES *Tom Brown at Oxford* 1.

**pin-money.** An allowance made by a husband to his wife for personal use; apparel- or dress-money: so called because formerly pins were costly and the sum allowed for their purchase large. By extension, any allowance to wife, daughter, or sister for personal expenses or as pocket-money.

You will be pestered for *pin-money*, and pestered with your wife's poor relations

MITCHELL *Reveries*.

The main Article with me is . . . that cursed *pin-money*—Five-hundred Pound per Annum *Pin-Money!*

STEELE *Tender Husband* act 1, sc. 1.

**pin one's faith to.** Repose absolute confidence in.

**pins and needles.** A tingling, pricking sensation, such as is experienced in a limb when it is "asleep"; hence, **on pins and needles**, in a condition marked by physical or mental uneasiness.

**pip.** A disease of fowls causing the secretion of thick mucus in the mouth, hence, a bilious condition in man.—**to have or get the pip.** [Brit.] To be out of sorts or depressed.

**pipe-dream.** [U. S.] An illusion or hallucination, as if resulting from the use of the pipe in smoking opium.

**pipe-laying.** [U. S.] The employment of voters at an election; as in laying of water-pipes. See quotation.—**pipe-layer.** One engaged in pipe-laying

Among the Glentworth papers was one in which he said that the men sent from

Philadelphia were to be employed in *laying pipes* for the introduction of Croton water. The Whig leaders were immediately stigmatized as *pipe-layers*, a term persistently applied to them for several years. THURLOW WEEED *Autobiography* 493.

**pipe one's eye.** [Brit. Slang.] To weep.

He then began to eve his pipe,

And then to *pipe his eye*

HOOD *Faithless Sally Brown*.

**piper's news.** [Scots.] Stale news. News already well known. Compare

FIDDLER'S NEWS.

**pirate.** [U. S.] 1. One who, acting within the law, reprints the works of an author who has failed to protect his rights; also, one who sells such works in competition with an officially designated agent or representative. Formerly, one who infringed on the rights of an author or artist. 2. One who is engaged in trading in liquor on the high seas, as in opposition to the Volstead Act.

**pitch and pay.** Pay cash

The word is *pitch and pay*,—trust none

SHAKESPEARE *Henry V* act II, sc. 3.

**pitch a tale or yarn.** To tell a story, usually a lengthy and extravagant one, rather for entertainment than for instruction or edification.

The skipper is in great glee to-night, he *itches his yarns* with gusto

CHAMBERS'S *Journal* 1885.

**pitch in.** Begin with energy.—**to pitch into.** To assail with words or blows.

**pitch it strong.** [U. S.] Declare emphatically or with reckless exaggeration.

**pitchers have ears, little.** See under EARS.

**place.** Office; position; in horse-racing, a position among the first three to pass the winning-post.—**Place, Act.** In English history, the Parliamentary act by which persons holding office under the crown are excluded from sitting in the House of Commons.—**place-betting.** [Racing] The laying of odds for a place.—**place-broker.** One who traffics in public offices.—**place-card.** A card bearing the name of a guest placed on the table at a formal dinner to indicate the seat he is to occupy.—**out of place.** Not appropriate or well-timed, unsuitable; out of order.—**place-holder.** One who holds an office or position, as under a government, especially as a means of livelihood often used derogatively to imply a subservient person.—**place-hunter.** One who seeks public office persistently a derogatory term.—**place-woman.** A woman who holds a government appointment.—**to give place to.** To make way or room for, also, to be succeeded by give way to

**placebo.** An inert substance administered as medicine for its effect on the patient's imagination.

A mere *placebo*—just a divertissement to cheer the spirits, and assist the effect of the waters

SCOTT *St. Ronan's Well* XX.

Physicians appeal to the imagination in desperate cases with bread pills and *placebos*.

American *Journal of Psychology* I, 143.

**placer-mining.** [U. S.] Surface-mining

A *placer-mine* was the ideal poor man's mine, from which, with the simple contrivance of a sluice-box, he washed out the precious nuggets of gold from the gravelly soil of mountain gulches.

The *Evening Post* New York, Feb. 22, 1909.

**plain as a pikestaff.** Perfectly plain; very clear.

In . . . Scotland . . . Religion is pure and spotless without ceremony, and plain as a *pike staff* without a surmise

WEEVER *Anc. Fun Mon.* 103.

**plain work.** Simple work with a needle as distinguished from embroidery or other ornamental or fancy work. Hence, household duties or any homely work.

She does *beefsteaks* and *plain work*

THACKERAY *Paris Sketch-book* *Beatrice Merger*.

**plan, American.** [U. S.] A system of payment for board and lodging at a hotel on the basis of the time the guest stays whether for one meal,

one day, or one week, and not by separate items. Compare **EUROPEAN PLAN**, below.

—**European plan**. [Eur] A system of charges at a hotel in which lodging and service are billed separately from meals, the latter being furnished to order — **pension plan**. See **PENSION**

**plank**. [U. S.] **I. n.** One specific declaration of party policy or principle from a political platform. See **PLATFORM**. **II. v.** To split and fasten to a plank for cooking. See quotation.

The principal dish was *planked* shad. By this process . . . [split] fish are fastened to a board and held towards a hot fire. *Science* V, 426

**plank down**. [U. S.] To pay cash down.

**platform**. A political manifesto, program, or declaration of principles, each separate declaration or principle being termed a *plank* in the United States.

I care nothing for names. All I ask for is a platform and an issue.

SALMON P. CHASE quoted in *Annual Report of American Historical Assn.*, for 1902, II, 123.

A noted politician who was surveying the landscape from the back platform of a railroad car in motion, was warned by the coloured porter that he must not stand there, and when he remarked that he thought a platform was meant to stand on, the darky replied, "Oh, no sah, a platform ain't meant to stand on. It's meant to get on on."

BRUCE Modern Democracies II, *The United States*

**platonic love**. Love that is purely spiritual, or devoid of sensual feeling between men and women, such as was described by Plato

**play** is used with various senses in the following phrases:—**play a part**.

To act insincerely; be double-faced or deceitful, pretend; also, to enact an assumed character

In the final struggle . . . England *played her part* well

GARDINER AND MULLINGER *Introduct. Studies of English Hist.* I, ix, 195

—**play ball!** Play the game, act on the square, get to work — **to bring or come into play**. To bring or come into use or exercise — **to make play**. Begin your game from the French "Faites votre jeu!" "Make your game!" Hence, to take the lead; set the pace — **to play false or one false**. To betray or be untrue, deal dishonestly with, deceive, cheat

You *played false* with us, Madam

SHERIDAN *The Rivals* act ii, sc. 2.

—**to play fast and loose**. To be inconstant; uncertain, be tricky or untrustworthy.

*Play fast and loose* with faith

SHAKESPEARE *King John* act iii, sc. 1.

—**to play into the hands of**. To contrive so as to benefit or to give advantage to — **to play off one against the other**. To oppose (one person or thing) to another for one's own benefit.

He *played off France against the world* and the world against France

*Annual Register* (1807)

—**to play Old Harry or Nick with**. To annoy or tease; cause trouble to — **to play one's cards well, badly, etc.** To display shrewdness or clumsiness in the management of one's affairs or plans — **to play one's trump card**. To bring forward one's reserve forces, strongest arguments, etc. — **to play one tricks**. To cheat, deceive; cajole — **to play possum**. [U. S.] To feign ignorance or pretend inattention, dissimulation, sham death or disability when in danger from the habit of the American opossum of feigning death when in danger

There's no chance to *play possum* with your brother any longer. It's lion and tiger now, if anything

W. G. SIMMS *The Kinsmen* I, 120.

—**to play the deuce, the devil, the fool, or the mischief with**. To harm or injure seriously — **to play the man**. To bear distress with fortitude, face unflinchingly; act as a man, be brave in the face of danger

'Be of good comfort, Master Ridley,' cried Latimer from amidst the flames. 'Play the man, we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.'

GARDINER *Eng. Hist. for Young Folks* 164

—**to play truant**. To stay away from duty, or, as children, from school, absent oneself without leave, loiter, idle — **to play up, or up to**. To rise sympathetically

to the mood of another in supporting him, hence, to support or stand by: often used derogatively implying toadyism to secure personal advantage

There is your playing up toady, who, unconscious to its feeder, is always *playing up* to its feeder's weaknesses BEACONSFIELD *Vivian Grey* II, xv.

—to play with the beard. To wheedle, mislead

Yet have I *play'd with his beard*, in knitting this knot,

I promise friendship, but—I meant it not

Old Plays, *Damon and Pythias* I, 177.

**played out.** Done for, exhausted; used up

Is our civilization a failure? Or is the Caucasian *played out*?

BRET HARTE *Further Letters from Truthful James* i.

**pleased as Punch.** Greatly pleased, very much pleased.

I was (as the poet says) as *pleased as Punch*

MOORE *Let to Lady Donegal in Diary* VIII, 137.

**please God.** God willing

**please the fates.** If nothing happens to prevent; if all is well; if circumstances will permit.

**please the pigs.** Please the fates: a phrase, used as a dialectal substitute for "If it please Providence," in which *pigs* was introduced through a rustic's love for alliteration, and which is not to be confused with Bosworth's Saxon *pga*, a virgin, or with *pyx*, the box containing the host.

There I'll be, *please the pigs*, on Thursday night

*Backwood's Magazine* June, 1891, p. 819.

**plebe.** [U. S.] A lower classman at the United States Military Academy, West Point.

**plighted.** Pleated; folded.

Creatures of the element,

That in the colors of the rainbow live,

And play 't' th' *plighted* clouds

MILTON *Comus* 299.

**ploughed or plowed.** [Brit.] Plucked or be plucked; rejected, as one having failed to pass a college examination.

**pluck** is used with especial significance in various idiomatic phrases.—

**to be plucked.** To fail to reach a proper standard in a college examination

If a man is *plucked*—that is, does not get marks enough to pass—his chance of a Fellowship is done for C. A. BRISTED *English University* 258.

—to pluck a dead lion by the beard. To make a brave show of valor when a danger is passed

You are the hare of whom the proverb goes,

Whose valour *plucks dead lions by the beard* SHAKESPEARE *King John* act II, sc. 1

—to pluck a pigeon. To swindle or fleece a simpleton —to pluck a crow. To pick

a quarrel with—to pluck away. To pull away, or separate by pulling, tear away

—to pluck down. To reduce to a lower state, pull down —to pluck off. 1. To

tear off 2. To take lower rank —to pluck up. 1. To tear out by the roots; ex-

terminate, as, to *pluck up* weeds 2. To gather together, summon up, to pull oneself

together, take heart, as, to *pluck up* courage

Even those passengers who were most distrustful of themselves *plucked up* amazingly

DICKENS *American Notes* p. 8

**pluck, n.** Heart; spirit; courage; determination in the face of opposition; resolution; a meaning derived from the heart, liver, lights or lungs of an ox or a sheep—that which is *plucked out* in dressing a carcass for market.

Be firm! one constant element in luck

Is genuine, solid, old Teutonic *pluck*

O. W. HOLMES *Rhymed Lesson*.

**plug.** 1. Anything damaged, worn or deteriorated, as by age, as an old horse, or an unsalable book. Sometimes used with *old*. 2. A coin in which holes have been filled with base metal — **plug-hat**. [Slang] A high silk hat, a top-hat, stove-pipe hat — **plug-ugly**. [U S] A tough or city ruffian, a rowdy given to unprovoked assaults on persons in the streets. See quotation The City of Baltimore, from whose midst the *plug-uglies* claim to hail Oregon Weekly Times Aug 7, 1857.

**plum.** 1. [U. S.] Public office as a reward for political service; hence, to shake the plum-tree, to distribute political patronage. 2. [Eng.] The sum of one hundred thousand pounds sterling; hence, a fortune or the person who possesses it. Sometimes spelled *plumb*.

He died worth a *plumb* and a half COLMAN *Clandestine Marriage* 111

**plumb or plomb.** [U. S.] Completely; entirely; close up.

—out of plumb. Not according to agreement, out of the vertical.

**plume oneself, to.** To take pride to oneself for; be proud of; felicitate highly; overvalue; boast; used reflexively; as, he *plumes* himself on his ability.

I have seen a Grammarian tower and *plume himself* over a single line in Horace, and show more pride in the construction of one Ode, than the Author in the composition of the whole book SIR T BROWNE *Religio Lasci* II.

What business have I, forsooth, to *plume myself* because the Duke of Wellington beat the French in Spain? THACKERAY *Men and Pictures*.

**plumes, borrowed.** Adornments or attributes borrowed from others; pretensions, as of a jackdaw in peacock's feathers.

**plump.** A conglomeration; group.

Here's a whole *plump* of rogues

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER *Double Marriage* act iii, sc 2.

**plunge.** To speculate recklessly or make wagers heedless of the result.

**plunger.** One who makes reckless wagers or who speculates rashly; a venturesome dealer in stocks.

**poCKET** is used figuratively or idiomatically in a number of terms.—**in one's pocket.** On terms of close friendship with; as close to one as one's pocket, also, under the influence of — **in pocket.** Having saved money by — **out of pocket.** Having lost money by — **pocket-book.** Money, financial resources, also, a wallet in which to carry money — **pocket an affront, insult or a wrong.** To allow an insult to pass without showing resentment, receive an affront without sign of indignation, submit meekly to or "swallow"

What! Wear the livery of my king, and *pocket an affront*

FARQUHAR *Constant Couple* act iii, sc 1

—**pocket borough.** [Brit \*Pol] An electoral division consisting of a Parliamentary borough owned or controlled by a single person or family — **pocket-pistol.** 1. A small pistol made to be carried in the pocket 2. A liquor-flask carried in the pocket

I always had on my journeys a *pocket pistol* loaded with brandy and lemon juice

BURT *Letters from N Scotland* I, 298.

—**pocket veto.** [U S Pol] A veto of a legislative measure by a President or Governor effected by retaining the measure unsigned, in which case he is said to *pocket* it.

If Congress adjourns within the ten days allowed the President for returning a bill, it is lost. His retaining it at the end of a session under these circumstances is popularly known as a "*pocket veto*"

BRYCE *American Commonwealth* I, 74. Note

—to **pocket one's pride.** To smother one's feelings, submit to a humiliation, be humble for the time being —to **put one's hand in one's pocket.** To contribute money to, pay out, generally, to some charity

**point** occurs in various senses in the following terms.—**at the point, on the point.** Almost at; on the verge or even just in the act.—**in point.** 1. Pertinent; as, an incident *in point* 2. In good order; fit —**in point of.**



In the matter of, as regards — **pointblank**. Without hesitation, directly; expressly, as, to contradict a statement *pointblank*

He tells out, *point-blank*, the most foolish things he has done

DINAH M. MULLOCK *A Noble Life* 271

— **point-devise, point-device**. Ultrafastidious, extra nice  
I abhor such phantastical phantasmas, such insouciant and *point-devise* companions

SHAKESPEARE *Love's Labor's Lost* act v, sc 1

— **to carry one's point**. To be successful in or as in anything at issue.

She ended by *carrying her own point*, and having her own way

WILKIE COLLINS *Dead Secret* III, 11

— **to come to the point**. To get at the root of a matter — **to gain a point**. To advance one step or point in the accomplishment of any purpose — **to make a point**. To gain or score a point — **to make a point of**. To make a special resolve about, insist upon

Her husband *made such a point* of his tea that she had little hope of persuading him to give it up

H. MARTINEAU *Brook Farm* vii, 88

— **to point**. [Archaic] Precisely, accurately to the last detail — **to point a moral**. To give emphasis or force to a moral precept

He left the name at which the world grew pale,

To *point a moral* or adorn a tale

JOHNSON *The Vanity of Human Wishes*

— **to score a point**. To add one to one's score in any game, or, figuratively, to gain one item of advantage in any contest — **to stand upon points**. To stop for small matters, as of courtesy, etc — **to strain or stretch a point**. To make a special exception against one's conscience or judgment

We've not quite so much proof as I could wish It would *strain a point* to arrest him as it stands

G. A. LAWRENCE *Guy Livingstone* xxxiv

— **to the point**. Apposite, pertinent, apt

"Is it impossible for you to speak to the *point*?" asked LaMotte

MRS. RADCLIFFE *Romance of the Forest*, 11

**points, to come to**. To begin fighting with swords.

They would have *come to points* immediately, had not the gentlemen interposed

SMOLLETT *Sir L. Greaves* III, 1, 70

**poke fun**. Joke or jest. — **to poke fun at**. To turn to playful ridicule, chaff; make a butt of.

The American . . . in a dry way, began to *poke his fun* at the unfortunate traveller

HOOD *Up the Rhine* 157

**poker<sup>1</sup>, poking-stick**. A small iron used to flute ruffles.

Where are my ruff, and *poker*?

Old play by THOMAS DEKKER act iii, l 280

Pins and *poking-sticks* of steel

SHAKESPEARE *Winter's Tale* act iv, sc 3

**poker<sup>2</sup>**. Any alarming object or apparition, goblin; bogie. **Old Poker**.

The devil

As if *Old Poker* was coming to take them away

H. WALPOLE *Letter to Hon. H. S. Conway* May 5, 1784

— **by the holy poker!** A humorous asseveration of unknown meaning but of Irish origin

I never saw anything to beat that — *by the holy poker*, I never did

MITFORD *Romance* Cape Frontier I, VIII

**poker talk**. Fireside gossip.

Gaston rattled forth this specimen of *poker talk* lightly

MRS. EDWARDS *Givton Girl* 11

**poky**. 1. Dull; spiritless; wanting in interest or action; as, a *poky* play or party. 2. Stuffy and confined; lacking freshness and airiness; as, a *poky* flat. 3. Shabby and shiny; worn and soiled: said of clothes.

**polish off**. To complete; finish up, as a piece of work, also, to settle, defeat.

The two between them could *polish off* a bottle of sherry in less time

LELAND *Egyptian Sketch Book* 282

Ned having *polished off* his sturdy opponent in thirty rounds

*Sporting Mag* xxiii, 247. (1829)

**poll-parrot.** A talkative woman.

**pomander.** Perfume; also, a perfume ball.

As when she from the water came,  
Where first she touch'd the mold,  
In balls, the people made the same,

For pomander, and sold DRAYTON *Quest of Cynthia* p. 623.

**pompion.** Originally, a pumpkin, later, a large, pompous fat man.

O here's another *pompion*, the cramm'd son of a starv'd usurer

FLETCHER *Rule a Wife* act 1, sc. 5.

**pom-pom.** 1. An automatic gun, as of the Vickers-Maxim type, so named from the sound made by the charge when fired. 2. A dance in honor of springtime, observed by the Yakima Indians, used also attributively.

The dancing of the *pom-pom* continues for one week and is kept interesting by occasional feasts. Love matches are made during the *pom-pom* week and many marriages are consummated. All debts are canceled before the feasting begins and difficulties with families and rivals are settled.

*Presbyterian Banner* Pittsburgh, Sept 25, '02, p. 20.

**pompon.** 1. In millinery, a tuft or ball of feathers, ribbon, or the like. 2. *Mul* The colored ball of wool on the front of a shako. 3. A tropical American fish, one of the grunters. 4. A variety of dahlia, chrysanthemum, or Provence rose, bearing a small globe-like flower.

**pond.** Same as BIG POND or HERRING POND.

**pone.** [U. S.] Bread made from corn-meal cooked in hot ashes. In the Southern States, any bread baked from maize-flour. Applied also to a very light bread made rich with milk, eggs, etc., and baked in flat cakes.

Their constant bread is *Pone*, not so called from the Latin, *Panis*, but from the Indian name, *Oppone* BEVERLY *Virginia* IV, §72, 532.

**pongo.** A marine in playful British usage, from a native African name for an anthropoid ape.

**Pons Asinorum.** See ASSES' BRIDGE.

**Pontius Pilate.** [Eng.] A pawnbroker.

**pony.** 1. [Brit.] (1) In flash language, money: hence the phrase, *pony up*, pay what you owe; settle up. (2) Twenty-five pounds sterling. 2. [U. S.] (1) A small glass of strong liquor. (2) A small measure of beer. In Scottish usage, nine-tenths of an imperial gill.

A couple of *ponies* of brandy.

*The Omaha Bee* Feb 18, 1896, p. 4, col. 7.

The *pony*, another Glasgow beer measure.

*The North British Daily Mail* April 7, 1896, col. 2.

(3) A literal translation of a Latin or Greek text for teachers, but commonly used surreptitiously by students in colleges and schools. 3.

[Eng.] A fringe of hair with even edge, cut square or slightly round, so as to hang over the forehead. Compare BOB, *v.*—to post the pony.

To lay down, deposit, or pay money that is owing.

I shan't let you off so easily this time, depend upon it. Come, post the *pony*, or take your measure on that sod. AINSWORTH *Rookwood* p. 240.

**pooh-pooh.** To show disdain for; deery contemptuously; speak with a sneer, about; make light of.

They *pooh-poohed* away every attempt at further enlargement of the suffrage

KINGSLEY *Alton Locke* xxxii.

—pooh-pooh theory. The theory that language originated in natural cries

MAX MÜLLER *Science of Language* ix, 352.

**poor** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases with varying significations, as of smallness, poverty, paltriness, "sorry," mean, scanty, inadequate.

—**as poor as a church mouse.** Very poor, frequently lacking the necessities of life. The young couple are as *poor as church-mice* THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* xxiii.

—**as poor as a coot, as poor as Job's turkey.** [U S] Extremely poor, destitute

—**poor as a crow.** Poverty stricken, thin, haggard, emaciated —**poor-book.** [Eng]

A book used for recording the names of poor people in receipt of relief from the parish

—**poor-box.** A contribution-box for alms, often placed at the door of a church.

Called also **poor-chest**. —**poor-farm.** A farm where paupers are cared for at public expense

—**poor fish.** [U S] One who is out of his element or lacks initiative — **poor house.**

A public establishment maintained as a dwelling for paupers — **poor in spirit.**

Of a lowly and meek disposition *Matt* v, 3 — **poor-john.** Slated and dried hake, hence, poor cheap fare

'Tis well, thou art not fish, if thou hadst, thou hadst been *poor John*

SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* act 1, sc 1.

—**poor-lights.** Candles provided for the burial services of the poor — **poor-man-**

**of-mutton.** [Scot] Boiled cold mutton — **poor-man's herb,** *n* The hedge-

hyssop — **poor man's mustard,** *n* Hedge-garlic — **poor-man's pepper,** *n* Pepper-grass

— **poor-man's rhubarb,** *n* The yellow-flowered meadow-rue — **poor**

**man's weather-glass.** The scarlet pimpernel, which is said to open its flowers in fine

weather and to close them in rainy weather — **poormaster.** [U S] An officer of a

county to whose charge paupers are committed — **poor old stick or poor stick.** One

lacking in energy or purpose, a weakling

The *poor old stick* used to cry out, "Oh you villians chिल्ds," and then we sermonised

her on the presumption of attempting to teach such clever blades as we were when she

was herself so ignorant CHARLOTTE BRONTË *Jane Eyre* xvii.

—**poor pride.** Pretentious show without means to support it — **poor-rate.** [Gt.

Brit] A tax formerly levied by churchwardens and overseers in a parish for relief

of the poor — **poor-soldier.** [Austral] The fruir-bird from its cry — **poor-spir-**

**ited.** Having little spirit or courage, cowardly — **poor white folks or trash.** [U S]

A low class of white residents of some of the Southern States, so called because of

their poverty-stricken condition, hence, any poor ignorant white inhabitant

The slave of a gentleman universally considers himself a superior being to *poor*

*white folks* J K PAULDING *Slavery in the United States* 205.

The terms "sandhiller," "clay eater," or *poor white trash* conveyed a terrible reproach,

for even the negroes looked down upon them PIRTENGER *Great Locomotive Chase* 74.

—**to go poor.** To turn, as milk, go sour — **to make or put up a poor mouth.**

To simulate poverty when in comfortable circumstances

**pop**<sup>1</sup>, *n.* [U S] 1. [P-] An adherent of the Populist political party—the

People's party, formed at Cincinnati in May, 1891. 2. Father.

**pop**<sup>2</sup>, *n.* [Gt. Brit.] 1. [P-] A social club and debating society founded

at Eton in 1811. 2. A young girl or woman: a contraction of *poppet*, a

term of endearment 3. A popular concert.

A Monday *Pop*, and on Saturday a variety entertainment when wet, which becomes

a gymkhana when fine LADY DUFFERIN *Viceroyal Life in India* p 99.

4. The red-winged thrush 5. A sharp, explosive noise, as, the *pop* of a pistol 6.

A sweet, flavored, unintoxicating drink containing carbon dioxide so called because

it expels the cork with explosive noise 7. [Gt. Brit] The short space of time occupied

by a *pop*, as, at a *pop*, suddenly 8. A pistol 9. The act of pawing—in *pop*.

In pledge or pawn — **pop-dock.** A plant, the foxglove — **prop-eye.** A prominent,

bulging eye — **pop-vine.** The West-Indian bladder-herb or winter cherry — **to pop**

**off.** To quit suddenly, leave hurriedly, also, to die — **to pop out.** To bulge out,

as the eyes, also, to go out suddenly, as a light — **to pop the question.** To propose

marriage to

Afraid he would now, and now, and now, *pop the question*, which he had not the

courage to put RICHARDSON *Grandison* VI, xx, 101.

**pop-corn.** [U. S.] A variety of Indian corn that contains sufficient oil

for expansion under heat to cause explosion when roasted.

The explosion turns the grain inside out, rupturing the yellow coat and exposing

the suddenly effloresced white part of the **grain** The grains are roasted by exposure to the heat of a fire.

—to **pop corn**. To cause to burst with a snapping sound See **POP-CORN**

**popinjay**. A chattering coxcomb, a fop a general term of contempt.

I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold,

To be so pestered with a *popinjay*,

Answered neglectingly I know not what

SHAKESPEARE *I Henry IV* act i, sc. 5.

**poplolly**. [Brit.] 1. A favorite or pet: a term of playful endearment; also, a mistress

This house, presided over by a *poplolly*! a magnificent woman, dressed to perfection, without a vestige of her former habits

CREEVEY in *Creevey Papers* II, 86.

2. A sweetmeat, lollypop. 3. A drink made from licorice

**poppet**. A dainty and pretty child hence, used as a term of endearment for a young woman.

**poppycock**. [U. S.] Boastful nonsense; piffle, bombast, twaddle.

You won't be able to find such another pack of *poppycock* gabblers as the present Congress.

ARTEMUS WARD on his *Travels* I, 3

**Populist Party**. [U. S. Pol.] The People's Party, that aimed at increase of currency, public control of railroads, and restricted ownership of land. It was formed in Cincinnati, May 19, 1891, and a factor in national affairs for a decade thereafter.

Fusion with the *populists* has been perfected [by the Democrats]

*Columbus Dispatch* Oct. 8, 1892

**pork**. 1. [U. S.] (1) A gift or a contribution to a political party fund. (2) An appropriation in the form of federal patronage. 2. [Brit.] A pig-headed person.

I mean not to dispute philosophy with this *pork*

MILTON Colasterion

**pork barrel**. [U. S. Polit.] 1. The total amount of the contributions to an election fund. 2. An appropriation of money by Congress as part of a scheme of political patronage often used attributively, as, *pork-barrel* legislation.

**Porkopolis**. [U. S.] Laterally, city of pork: applied formerly to Cincinnati, when it was a packing center; later, and for the same reason, to Chicago.

**pork-pie**. [Brit.] A toque-like hat with rolled brim, popular in mid-Victorian days.

She made herself a sealskin jacket and a *pork-pie* hat

READE *Foul Play* xxxii

**porterhouse steak**. [U. S.] A cut between the tenderloin and the sirloin; so called from first being served at a house where porter, ale, and beer were sold at retail For a traditional explanation of the origin of the name, see quotation

In the old coaching days there was a tavern in New York, kept by a man named *Porter*, famous for its steaks

A traveller called and called again for a steak. Finally the innkeeper in his distress, took from his larder a large piece of sirloin put there for roasting, and cut from it a piece to broil. It was found delicious and was christened after the house and its proprietor, "*Porter House Steak*"

CLAPIN *Dictionary of Americanisms*

**portmanteau word**. A term formed by combining the elements of two other words, as *chimpanzebra*: first used by Charles L. Dodgson ("Lewis Carroll")

Well "slithv" means "lithe" and "slimy" . . . You see it's like a *portmanteau*—there are two meanings picked up into one word

LEWIS CARROL *Through the Looking Glass* VI, 127

**pose.** Nasal catarrh; running of the nose.

By the *pose* in thy nose,  
And the gout in thy tose.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER *Chances* act v, sc. 3.

**position to, to be in a.** To have the time, or be in possession of the information (necessary to consider a subject or some matter projected).

We are now in a *position* to discuss the air thermometer. B. STEWART *Heat* 87

**posse.** A force or body of men; a squad.

It was high noon and the *posse* had been in saddle since dawn

MURFREE *Prophet of Great Smoky Mountains*, 20.

**possess oneself.** To make oneself master of, whether by force or legally, as by obtaining full control, also, to completely dominate one.

No plain man would hesitate to say that a thief *possesses himself* of the goods he carries away

POLLOCK AND WRIGHT *Possession in Common Law*.

**possess one's soul.** To be calm and self-possessed; to refrain from worry while awaiting the issue; wait patiently and with fortitude.

Every man worthy of the name, should know how to *possess his soul*—bearing with patience those things which energy cannot change

MRS LYNN LINTON in *Chambers's Journal* Oct. 4, 1884.

**possession, give.** To turn over for occupancy by another; put into the control of

**possession, have.** To enjoy the occupancy, control, or ownership of.

**possession is nine (or eleven) points of the law.** One in control or occupancy of has advantage over one claiming ownership or seeking to assert it at law To have is to hold

At least she had possession, and that is *nine points of the law*, though scarcely one of honesty

SMOLLETT'S trans of *Le Sage's Gil Blas* 368

**post-and-rails tea.** [Australian] Tea of inferior quality: so called from the pieces of leaves or stalks that float around in it.

Large bits of the tea, or supposed tea, float about in the billy, which are compared by a strong imagination to the *posts and rails* of the wooden fence so frequent in Australia

MORRIS *Australasian Dictionary*

**post, deaf as a.** Completely deaf.

**post oneself about or on.** To inform oneself; to acquire a thorough knowledge of a subject; to become conversant with.

The lovers of the sport always *post themselves* as to the character of the bulls who are to perform

C D WARNER *Roundabout Journey* 239.

Tell me all about it; what books you had to *post yourself up* in for your examinations, and how you came out of them

SARAH TYTLER *Buried Diamonds* VII

**pot. I. n. 1.** To secure by shooting; bag, as, he *potted* the quail as it rose

2. To shoot (a ball) into a pocket, as in pool. 3. To shape and fire, as porcelain II. n. 1. A measure of capacity approximating a quart, as, a *pot* of brown October ale

2. (1) A large sum of money (2) A horse that is backed by such a sum to win a race (3) The sum total of stakes played for, as in a game (4) The pool, as in horse-racing or certain card games

3 A trophy or cup offered for some athletic competition

**pot** is used with various idiomatic senses in a number of terms—a **big pot**. [Brit.] A person of importance a **big-wig**

He's rather a *big pot* as a preacher I hear

NISBET *Sheep's Clothing* 131

—a **little pot is soon hot**. A small or narrow-minded person is quick-tempered It takes very little to anger a small mind

Now, were not I a *little pot*, and *soon hot*, my very lips might freeze to my teeth . . . for, considering the weather, a taller man than I will take cold

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act iv, sc. 1.

- pot-ale**. The refuse from a grain distillery —**pot-bank**. [Eng.] The heart of the Staffordshire pottery district —**pot-barley**. Hulled barley —**pot-belly**. A large, protuberant belly or a person having one —**pot-boiler**. A piece of work in art or literature produced to obtain the means of subsistence —**potboy**. [Eng.] A young man who cleans ale-pots or metal drinking-mugs, and assists in serving customers in a public house —**pot-companion**. A fellow toper, a boon companion —**pot-gallery**. A gallery projecting over a river-bank —**pot-garden**. A kitchen-garden —**pot-girl**. [Eng.] A barmaid —**pot-hat**. A hat shaped like a bowl, a bowler, derby —**pot-hellion**. [U. S.] A baked pie of meat and vegetables —**pot-herb**. Any herb of which the tops are boiled for food —**pot-hook**. 1. A curved hook for hanging pots or lifting them, hence, a curved stroke formerly practised by children in learning to write 2. A neck-yoke formerly worn by runaway slaves —**pot-house**. A house licensed to sell liquor for consumption on the premises, an ale-house used frequently in disparagement, as a *pot-house* politician —**pot-hunter**. An athlete who engages in competition for the sake of winning and exhibiting the cups or trophies he wins —**pot-knight**. A drunkard —**pot-lace**. A variety of lace the pattern of which shows baskets or vases —**potlatch**. A gift among the American Indians of the Northwest, also, a feast given by a wealthy Indian as an evidence of his greatness —**pot-luck**. Whatever there be in the pot to eat. In the phrase to **take pot-luck**, to share in the home meal —**pot-man**. 1. Same as *potboy* 2. A drinking companion —**pot-oven**. An iron disk used for keeping cooked food warm —**pot-roast**. Meat cooked in a pot with very little water that is allowed to boil away, and the meat allowed to brown —**pot-shot**. A shot fired without taking proper aim —**pot-valor**. Courage induced by drink —**pot-wrestler**. A scullion —**the pot calls the kettle black**. The one who is equally at fault with his accomplice accuses him, one chides another for a blunder common to both, hence, one is as bad as the other —**the pot of hospitality**. A caldron in which the food for a household was cooked and of which food any unexpected guest shared a homely phrase of the Irish
- The *pot of hospitality* was set to boil upon the fire and there was much mirth and heartiness and entertainment. *The Nineteenth Century* Oct 1891, p 643
- to keep the pot boiling**. 1. To keep the fun going
- A common expression among young people, when they are anxious to carry on their gambols with spirit. BROCKETT *N. C. Gloss*
2. To get the income for a comfortable living said in contempt of artists and writers who work for immediate results, or without regard for their reputations
- To employ them, as a literary man is always tempted, to *keep the domestic pot a boiling* LOWELL *Study Window* 139
- to go to pot**. To fall into decay or ruin, also, to go to the bad —**to betray the pot to the roses**. To reveal a secret, let the cat out of the bag
- potato** is sometimes used with a qualification to designate an individual; as, a **big** or **small potato**, an important or an unimportant person.—
- potato-bogle**. A scarecrow.
- potato-trap**. [Vulgar.] The mouth.
- Tom . . . delivered a rattling clinker upon the Bernicia boy's *potato-trap* THACKERAY *Roundabout Papers* iv.
- poteen**. Irish whisky illicitly manufactured: from Irish *poitín*, diminutive of *poite*, pot.
- pouncet-box**. A small perforated box for holding perfumery.
- And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held  
A *pouncet-box*, which ever and anon  
He gave his nose, and took't away again  
SHAKESPEARE *I Henry IV* act i, sc 3.
- pound**. [U. S.] To hammer, beat or force down, as the price of a stock.
- The bears let the opportunities to *pound* securities go by the board  
*Munsey's Magazine* xxiv, 522.
- to claim one's pound of flesh**. To demand the utmost penalty of the law, as *did Shylock of Antonio* in Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice," act iii, sc 1
- powder and shot, not worth the**. Not worth the cost or effort expended.

**pow-wow.** I. *n.* A meeting, originally, a council meeting of the American Indians; now, any political or other meeting, as for the exchange of ideas, at which no business is done. II. *v.* To hold a deliberative council, a noisy political meeting, or one characterized by garrulosity.

**practise.** Simulation, treachery.

This act persuades me,  
That this remotion of the duke and her  
Is *practise* only

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act ii, sc 4.

**prairie.** [U. S.] Level plains destitute of trees and shrubs, but covered with grass.

We are so taken with the *prairies* that no "timbered" land can satisfy our present views

M BIRBECK *Journey in America* 132

—**prairie cocktail.** [U. S.] Same as **prairie oyster** —**prairie-fever.** Ardent enthusiasm for life on the prairie

Intoxicated with the romance of my new life I had caught the *prairie fever*

MAYNE REID *Scalp Hunters* iii

—**prairie oyster.** [U. S.] A drink consisting of a raw egg, seasoned, and dropped in vinegar or spirits —**prairie-schooner.** [U. S.] Large covered wagons drawn by teams of oxen or mules and used on the plains before railways were built —**Prairie State.** [U. S.] The State of Illinois

**pray.** Please; let me entreat or implore (you): a contraction of "I pray" usually indicating a desire and frequently preceded by a question.

Shall I tell you why? *Pray* do.

JOWETT *Plato* III, 354.

—**pray tell me, him, her, etc.** Please inform me, etc

**prayer-book.** 1. [Brit. Slang.] A pack of playing-cards. 2. [Naut.] A small holystone.

*Prayer-books*,—are used to scrub in among the crevices and narrow places, where the large holystone will not go

R H DANA *Two Years Before the Mast* xxiii

**precious.** Very considerable; also, ironically, good-for-nothing; of little worth.

—**precious humbug.** An egregious impostor —**precious little.** Very little

**premium, at a.** Above par, hence, figuratively, in great demand.

**preparedness.** [U. S. Pol.] A state of readiness, especially military readiness, for defense in the event of war.

**presence of mind.** Coolness, alertness, and readiness of resource in a situation of sudden danger, embarrassment, or difficulty.

**pretty.** Fine; nice; used ironically to mean the opposite; as, a *pretty* mess you made of it —**pretty go.** A critical situation; an awkward condition of affairs —**pretty penny.** A large sum of money —**pretty time of it.** A difficult or unpleasant time —**to do or talk pretty.** To act or speak pleasantly, also, to affect the amiable, be obsequious

**previous, a little, a trifle, or too.** [U. S.] Too soon; ahead of time or occasion; somewhat premature.

The stock exchange has been, in the language of the street, a *little too previous*

*Westminster Gazette* July 16, 1902.

**Prex.** [U. S.] A college president: students' slang.

**prick off or out.** To transplant closely, as young plants; to plant in pots or frames.

The seedlings, when grown enough, may be *pricked out* into small pots

GLENNY *Handbook of the Flower Garden* 22.

**prick up oneself.** To show off; adorn or ornament oneself, to dress up.

*Pricked up* in clothes,

Why should he fear our rising? MASSINGER *Old Law* act ii, sc 1.

**prick up the ears.** To listen intently; pay close attention to.

I *pricked up the ears* of curiosity at this exordium. J. W. CROKER *Diary* Oct. 26, 1826.

**prig.** One who assumes aggressive superiority in dress, social standing, morals, etc.; whence **priggdom**, **priggery**, **priggishness**, **priggism**.

A *prig* is a fellow who is always making you a present of his opinions

GEORGE ELIOT *Middlemarch* xi

There is a deficiency, a littleness, a *priggishness*, a set off of vulgarity

OXENHAM *Short Studies* 150.

**prima facie.** [L] At first view; so far as at first appears.—**prima facie case.** A case apparently established by the evidence (as yet unexplained and uncontradicted) adduced by the plaintiff in support of it.

**primary.** [U. S. Pol] A preliminary convention, election or caucus, or a balloting of voters for the purpose of nominating candidates for political office.

**primerole.** 1. A primrose, cowslip, or field daisy. 2. A pretty young woman.

Wat was hire mete

The *primerole* ant the violet

*Song in Anglia* XXX, 175, quoted by Sir James A. H. Murray in *New Eng. Dict.*

Hir shoes were laced on hir legges hye,

She was a *primerole*, a piggesnye CHAUCER *Canterbury Tales*, *Miller's Tale*, 82.

**primp.** To dress oneself ostentatiously, make a display for show.

**primrose path, primrose way.** The gay path or flowery way.

Himself the *primrose path* of dalliance treads SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act 1, sc 3.

**prink or princk.** To dress for display; primp.

Ay, prune thy feathers and *prink* thyself gay.

SCOTT *Monastery* XXIV.

**prithee.** A corruption of "pray thee."

**pro bono publico.** [L] For the public good; for the well-being of all.

**procession, to head the.** To take the lead.

**procession, to join the.** To take part in a movement; to follow with the crowd.

**prock.** [U. S.] A mythical quadruped called in Maine a **side-hill badger**. See quotation

The *prock*, that remarkable western animal, has two short legs on one side and two long ones on the other, to enable him to keep his perpendicular while browsing on the sides of steep mountains *The Knickerbocker Magazine* April 1849, p 363

**Procrustean bed, to place on or make to fit the.** To attempt to force upon people a single standard of thought, action or being from Procrustes, a legendary Greek robber, who forced his captives down on a couch, and cut off their limbs if they were too long for it, and if too short stretched them to fit.

**proface.** May it profit you: a welcome to a meal equivalent to "may good digestion wait on appetite."

A French and English man at dinner sate,

And neither understanding other's prate,

The Frenchman says "Mange, *proface*, Monsieur!"

*The Sculler Epigrams* 43.

**profiteer.** [U. S.] I. *n.* One who devotes himself to the acquisition of excessive profits: usually in a bad sense. II. *v.* To act as a profiteer.

**pro forma.** [L] As a matter of form; presented as a matter of form.

The cession of the Crimea by the Porte was contrary to the Alcoran, and was therefore admitted merely *pro forma* *Gentleman's Magazine* LVIII, 73.



**promise you, I.** I assure you; I tell you plainly; you may be certain.

You won't get a lamb out of our fold, *I promise you.* DIDDIN *The Quaker* act 1, sc. 1  
Magnificent dandies, *I promise you*, some of us were

THACKERAY *Roundabout Papers*, *Peal of Bells*.

**proof of the pudding is in the eating.** Certainty is the outcome of actual experience.

The *proof of the pudding is in the eating*, so I will give you a specimen of my talent.  
LE SAGE in Smollett's transl. of *Gul Blas*.

**proof, put to the.** To subject to test; try in practise

Drug thy memories lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be *put to proof*

TENNYSON *Locksley Hall* 77.

**pros and cons.** Arguments for and against; both sides of. from *pro et contra* [L.] for and against

I felt justified in stating all the *pros and cons* of the case. HUXLEY *Life* II, ii, 21.

**prospect.** I. *n.* A person to whom one expects to sell stocks, bonds, books, real estate, etc.; a prospective customer. II. *v.* To search for gold, silver, oil, or other mineral wealth, in order to stake out a claim.

He had been on a *prospecting* tour, or examining the deep canons of the rivers and ravines for a suitable place to dig JAMES L. TYSON *Diary in California* 73

**pro tempore.** [L.] For the time; temporary.

The *pro tempore* Dictator soon came to be perpetual. MONTAGU *Ancient Republic* 353.

**proud flesh.** 1. A granulated growth resembling flesh in a wound or sore in process of healing. 2. Display of arrogance; show of pride; pose of superiority; haughtiness.

Don't be proud and turn up your nose  
At poorer people in plainer clothes,  
But learn, for the sake of your soul's repose,  
That all *proud flesh*, where'er it grows,  
Is liable to irritation

S S COX *Because You Flourish in Worldly Affairs*.

**proud, to do oneself.** To show to advantage; distinguish oneself; win glory, approbation: sometimes used ironically.

The frank confession *does you proud*.

SIDNEY LUSKA *Land of Love*.

**public opinion.** The prevailing sentiment of a community.

**pudding-time, to come in.** To arrive just in time; that is, in time for the pudding which anciently was the first course served at dinner.

I came in season, as they say in *pudding time*, *tempore veni*

WITTHAL'S *Dictionarie* (ed. 1608) p. 3.

**Puddledock, Duchess of.** An affected or conceited woman: a contemptuous title, in reference to a muddy slope down which horses were led to be watered at the river Thames in London.

**puff.** I. *n.* 1. Anything inflated with gas; also a fluffy or spongy article. 2. A published expression of fulsome or undeserved praise, as by some person interested; any undue praise printed for public consumption. 3. One who writes, prints or circulates such praise.

Two *puffs* who have money given them to play with A "Clerk" who is a check upon the *Puffs* to see that they sink none of the money given them

St James's *Evening Post* 1773.

Puffing is of various sorts; the principal are the *puff* direct, the *puff* preliminary, the *puff* collateral, the *puff* collusive, the *puff* oblique, or *puff* by implication

SHERIDAN *Critic* act i, sc. 2.

II. *v.* To write, print, or circulate puffs See definition 2 of the noun above

**pull.** 1. [U. S.] Influence; advantage; also, the means of exercising it: usually in an unfavorable sense. 2. [Brit.] A draft of drink.

I went straight away and had a *pull* of rum. NEWMAN *Stamping Trucks* 49.

The word *pull* is used with varied significance in the following phrases—**pull down your jacket or vest.** [U. S.] Keep yourself in hand, keep calm—to **have a** or **the pull.** To have power to influence, as in politics, have an advantage.

They know . . . who naturally *have the pull* over them. THACKERAY *Newcomes* XLI.

—to **pull a long, sanctimonious, etc. face.** To look very solemn or serious.

The Lord Chancellor *pulled a very long face* because the young prince could not be induced to study. THACKERAY *The Ring and the Rose* vi.

—to **pull foot.** To hasten, hurry—to **pull one's leg.** 1. [Brit.] To impose upon; chaff, humbug. 2. [U. S.] To obtain money from.

Then I shall be able to *pull the leg* of that chap. . . . He is always trying to do me

CHURCHWARD *Blackbirding* 216

—to **pull the strings, wires or ropes.** To set in motion secretly, be the hidden cause of action—to **pull the wool over one's eyes.** To dupe or deceive.

We *pulled the wool over their eyes* by making them think we only intended to stop in camp six days. O. J. VICTOR *Host of Southern Rebellion* II, 161

—to **pull through.** To recover; as, from illness, also, to overcome, succeed despite difficulties, bring to a successful issue, accomplish.

Youth and a sound constitution began to *pull him through*. READE *Never Too Late* LI

—to **pull together.** To act in unison, work in harmony, also, to concentrate, as one's faculties, collect one's wits, become composed, hence, to recover.

Ye *pulled together* with one mind. WORDSWORTH *Waggoner* I, 133

It [the Republic] can *pull itself together* in moments of danger.

BRYCE *American Commonwealth* III, xcvi, 349

—to **pull up.** 1. To pluck up by the roots, hence, to extirpate, eradicate, destroy.

2. To stop, as a horse, by pulling on the reins, hence, to stop in any course.

Well, I'll go slower, but *pull me up* if I forget to keep the brake on.

ZANGWILL *Bow Mystery* 169.

3. To take courage.

Let these that are weak and fearful *pull up* their spirits.

BISHOP HALL *Hard Tests* Joel iii, 10.

—to **pull up stakes.** [U. S.] To strike camp; prepare to leave a locality, pack one's furniture or baggage.

The allusion, of course, is to *pulling up the stakes* of a tent, and is a vivid reminiscence of a nomad life amid the pathless wildernesses of the Far West. CLAPIN *Americanisms*.

**pulse, to feel one's.** To ascertain the rate or character of the pulse, usually by feeling the radial artery at the wrist; figuratively, to sound one's opinions or purposes.

He who has only *felt the pulse* of an age can tell us how fast or slow its heart really beats toward evil or toward good. SWINBURNE *Essays and Studies* V.

**pulse, to take the.** To ascertain the views or feelings of.

This Government *wishes to tell its own story* and my *pulse was felt*.

SOUTHEY *Letters* IV, 139.

**pump.** [Colloq.] To question discreetly; sound; obtain information without appearing to seek it.

She was *pumping* me about how your worship's affairs stood.

CONGREVE *Old Batchelor* act v, sc. 4.

**pumps.** 1. Slipper-like shoes; now, dancing-shoes.

Thou shalt not need to travel with thy *pumps* full of gravel any more.

BEN JONSON *Poetaster* act iii, sc. 1.

2. The eyes.

Your *pumps* have been at work—you've been crying, girl. BUCKSTONE *Bear Hunters*.

**punt.** [Brit.] To gamble; in recent usage, to play for small stakes; whence, **punter**, a gambler; **punting-shop**, a gambling-hell.

**pupelo.** [Local, U. S.] A drink distilled from cider; cider-brandy: apple-jack, so called in New England.

There were fine distilleries for the manufacture of cider-brandy, or what was familiarly known as *pupelo* S JUDD *Margaret* I, vii.

**pup, puppy, puppy-dog.** A fop, a coxcomb; a vain or unmannerly fool; whence **puppyism**, affectation or conceit; **puppyish**, impertinent; **puppy-headed**, stupid

The unbred *puppy*, who had never seen A creature look so gay or talk so fine

I shall laugh myself to death at this *puppy-headed* monster ROCHESSTER *From Art to Chloc.*

**purchase, not worth a day's, hour's or year's.** Not likely to last the time mentioned.

The doctor says that, with his short neck, his life's *not worth two years' purchase*

MARRYAT *Peter Simple* xxix.

**purfle, to.** To ornament; trim.

A goodly lady clad in scarlet red,

*Purfled* with gold and pearle of rich assay

SPENSER *Ferrie Queene* I, ii, 13

**purgation.** The action of clearing from false beliefs, accusation or suspicion of crime or guilt.

If any man doubt, let him put me to my *purgation*

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act v, sc 4, l 45.

**puritan.** A rigidly scrupulous person, a self-righteous poser

Marry, sir, sometimes he is a kind of *puritan* SHAKESPEARE *Twelfth Night* act ii, sc. 3.

**purl. I. n.** A circle; eddy.

Whose stream an easie breath doth seem to flow,

Which on the sparkling gravel runs in *purls*,

As though the waves had been of silver curls

DRAYTON'S *Mortimeriados*.

**II. v.** To circle or eddy as a stream; curl like smoke.

From his lips did fly

Thin, winding breath, which *purl'd* up to the sky.

SHAKESPEARE *Rape of Lucrece*.

**purple**, when used with the definite article, designates, imperial, royal, or consular rank or dignity. It signifies nobility or wealth of family.

Hence, **to be born to** or **cradled in the purple**. To be born of royal or princely blood, of noble birth. Purple is not merely the imperial color of distinguishing the dress of emperors, kings, consuls, etc., but it is the color of imperial and royal mourning.

True Liberals who have not had the good fortune to be born in the *Whig purple*

HENRY LABOUCHERE in *Fortnightly Review* Feb 1884, p 208

—**to marry into the purple.** To wed one of royal blood hence, to marry a prince or a nobleman; marry well

**purpose, on.** Intentionally; designedly, as opposed to chance or accident.

Belike his wife . . .

*On purpose* shut the doores against his way

SHAKESPEARE *Comedy of Errors* act iv, sc 3.

When there is a society pensioned and set apart *on purpose* for the designing of them

ADDISON *Dial Medals*

**purpose, to small, little, or no.** To little use; without much practical result; in vain: conversely, to **great, good, etc.**

I used to insist on this, but to *no purpose*

H MARTINEAU *Ill Pol Econ*, T Tyne VII, 129.

**purpose, to the.** To the subject or point at issue; opposite to the point.

I'll tell you a story to the *purpose*,

DE FOE *Robinson Crusoe* II, iii, 58.

**purse-proud.** Puffed up by the possession of riches; proud of money.

I think a *purseproud* tradesman one of the most troublesome and intolerable of all men  
DEFOE *English Tradesman* II, 149

**purse, to make up a.** To get together or collect a sum of money, to collect subscriptions on behalf of some person.

She makes a *private purse*, which we are told by anti-sentimentalists, all wives love to do  
RICHARDSON *Clarissa Harlowe* IV, 87

**pursive, or pursy.** Short-winded or fat, hence, prosperous; wealthy.

Slothful and *pursy*, insolent and mean,  
Were every bishop, prebendary, dean  
CRABBE *Works* IV, 12

**push.** A number of friends or associates; a crowd; set; lot; hence, the mob.

**push, to bring, come or put to the.** To be brought or come under the pressure of affairs or circumstances or be placed in the condition of being pushed.

**push, to get or give the.** To be discharged, as from employ; be rejected as a suitor.

She was always taking on new ones, for you *got the push* in a year or two, arter you got too big  
EMERSON *Lippo* XX

**puss.** A pet name for a child or young woman: in playful endearment and usually with a qualifying word as *little, saucy, silly*, etc. Formerly a woman of equivocal reputation.

The *little puss* seems already to have airs enough to make a man miserable  
ELIOT *Adam Bede* IX.

**pussyfoot.** [U. S.] To work with stealth and quiet; move about gently; tread softly, as a cat. act secretly: a Rooseveltian phrase.

The Colonel [Roosevelt] was consumed with a desire to force "Preparedness and Americanism" on the Republican Party, which till then had been *pussy-footed*, to use the Colonel's own word  
The New York Times Jan 7, 1919

**put** is used with varied senses in following terms.—**a put-up job.** [U. S.]

A prearranged plan or preconcocted scheme, a plant, a conspiracy.

—**not to put it past one.** Not to seek further than the one (person) in mind to place the responsibility for —**put that in your pipe and smoke it.** Take note of what has been said and give it careful thought: an injunction, generally in rebuke

For this you've my word, and I never yet broke it  
So *put that in your pipe, my Lord Otto, and smoke it*

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends, Log of St Odile*

—**put this in your hat.** [U. S.] Bear this in mind, keep this in memory —**put up or shut up!** [U. S.] Pay or cease talking: an admonition sometimes extended to a

garrulous poker-player to make good his words with his chips, hence, act and don't talk —**to put about.** 1. To bewilder or annoy, also, to put to trouble, inconvenience, distress 2. To circulate, report, publish.

Oh don't *put yourself about* for me

READE *Griffith Gaunt* II, 297

This has been *put about* as a discovery

J H NEWMAN *Cath in England* 313.

—**to put a girdle about or around.** To travel around

Methinks I *put a girdle about Europe*

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER *Queen of Corinth* act II

—**to put by.** 1. To thrust aside; turn away.

There is no use *putting by* that crown, queens you must always be

RUSKIN *Sesame and Lilies*.

2. To lay by or store up; save, as money

The old gentleman had *put by* a little money that no one knew of

DICKENS *Old Curiosity Shop* XX

3. To alter one's mind, change one's course, as, she *put by* her resolve —**to put down.**

1. To repress; crush; baffle; as, *to put down* rebellion

—2. To strip of power, rank, etc., degrade

Judges were almost tools of the King who could set them up and *put them down* at his pleasure

M J GUEST *Lectures on the History of England* 447

Sir Peter is such an enemy to scandal I believe he would have it *put down* by parliament.

SHERIDAN *School for Scandal* act II, sc 2

3. To set down, as a deposit, or as a name on a list, to subscribe 4. To lay away in preservation for future sale or use, as butter, eggs, etc 5. To lower, diminish, as prices, or as the custom and use of a thing 6. To confute, silence 7. [Eng] To dispense with, as, the man has to *put down* his carriage 8. [Print] To set in lower case type —to *put in*. 1. To introduce among others, interpose

Wallop sat down and Baxter himself attempted to *put in* a word

MACAULAY *History of England* IV i, 493

2. To insert, as a passage or clause 3. To enter in due form, present 4. To assign to office 5. To restore to place, set, as a dislocated part 6. To enter a place for shelter or supplies, as a ship into harbor 7. To exert oneself with vigor. 8. To spend a certain amount of time in some occupation or place

I couldn't do anything with the letters after I had written them. But it *put in* the time

MARK TWAIN *Yankee at King Arthur's Court* XLIII

9. [U S] To deliver —to *put in an appearance*. To present oneself at a particular place

Gray hair No. 19 has just *put in an appearance* *Temple Bar Magazine* VI, 335

—to *put off*. 1. To discard, lay off, as a garment

*Putting off* the courtier, he now *puts on* the philosopher *MILTON Eikon Basilike* VI 9

2. To delay, postpone

They could not *put off* the penalty, but they might steel themselves cheerfully to share it

ROBERTSON *Sermons* second series, ser. xxi, 428.

3. To turn aside from a purpose or demand, disappoint 4. To put into circulation, as something fraudulent, palm off 5. To push from land, as a boat —to *put on* or *upon*. 1. To apparel oneself or invest with, clothes or covering 2. To assume, take on, as, to *put on* a serious look 3. To charge upon, ascribe to, as, he *put* the blame on his help and *put* a wrong construction upon the thing 4. To bring into play, turn on, as, to *put on* steam 5. To impose upon, deceive 6. To restrict to, as, to *put one* on bread and water 7. To add, as, to *put on* flesh 8. To push forward, as the hands of a clock 9. To incite, encourage; urge onward —to *put one's foot on another's neck*. To subdue, crush or trample upon, reduce to slavery or to abject obedience.

See, *your foot is on our necks*,

We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your will *TENNISON The Princess* vi, 150  
—to *put one's hand to the plow*. To begin an undertaking, enter upon some project or enterprise

And Jesus said unto him, No man, having *put his hand to the plow*, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God

*LUKE* ix, 62

—to *put one's head into the lion's mouth*. To run a needless risk, to invite danger by foolhardy action —to *put one's pipe out*. To extinguish, suppress one, check one's success, to take "the shine" out of, that is, to belittle or decry

You're jealous of the girl, and want me to *put her pipe out*

FLORENCE MARRYAT *Under Lilacs and Roses* xxx.

—to *put one's pride in one's pocket*. To pocket an affront, be humble for the occasion —to *put out*. 1. To extinguish, as a flame

All my idle flames are extinguished, as you may observe, ordinary fires are often *put out* by Sunshine

STEELE *Tatler* No. 58.

2. To blind (the eyes)

Betray'd, Captiv'd, and both my eyes *put out*

MILTON *Samson* 33

3. To extend, as a hand 4. To send forth or shoot out, as a bud 5. To expel, discharge 6. To issue, publish, as a book 7. To expend or place at interest, as money 8. To confuse, discompose, as a person speaking 9. To dislocate, as a joint 10. To bring into exercise, use; as, to *put out* strength 11. To irritate, displease 12. [Naut] To begin a voyage 13. To depart suddenly, make haste 14. To place in the care of another, as an infant

Their children were often *put out* to wet nurse with the native Irish

W LONGMAN *History Edward III* I, xix, 343

15. [Baseball & Cricket] To cause a member of the side at bat to be out 16. [Law] To cut an opening for the admission of light, open, as by the insertion of windows, as, the builder *put out* ten lights 17. To cause inconvenience to another or to oneself —to **put out of countenance**. See under COUNTEenance —to **put out of court**. To disqualify one from speaking with authority, to nullify one's evidence, to be ruled out of court

The fact that they were believed to be opposed on principle to all wars *put them out of court* in public estimation JUSTIN M'CARTHY *Hist Our Own Times*

—to **put this and that** or **that and this together**. To combine, as facts or theories, and by reasoning therefrom come to a conclusion Also, to **put two and two together**.—to **put to bed with a shovel**. To burv, inter —to **put to death**. 1. To deprive of life in accordance with legal sentence, execute, as, the murderer was *put to death* 2. To slaughter, kill

—to **put to flight**. To cause to flee.

For it suld be full mekill mycht, That now suld *put thaim to the flycht*.

BARBOUR *Bruce* ii 267

—to **put (one) to (upon) his trump or trumps**. 1. To put to the last expedient. 2. To oblige a card-player to play out his trumps.

(1) The strangeness of her dress *put me to my trumps* to conceive ether what it was, or how it was put on R PALLOCK P *Wilkins* xiv (1883), 46.

—to **put to it**. To urge upon, press hard, beset, usually in the phrase *hard put to it* —to **put to one's hand**. To set to work at something. 2. To render assistance.

Whereunto also Clement . . . *put to his helping hand*

KNOLLES *Hist Turks* (1621) 1115

—to **put to shift or shifts**. To bring to extremity

Weake faith lookes for means, and is *put to shifts* when she sees them fail

EARL MANCHESTER *Contempl. Mortis* 91

—to **put to the blush**. See under BLUSH —to **put up**. 1. To lay aside or put in its proper place

If you aren't for any more whist we may as well *put up* the cards

MRS F MANN *Parish Hilly* IV.

2. To pack away or preserve, hoard, as, *to put up* fruit 3. To lodge 4. To erect; build, as, he *put up* a barn 5. To propose, as a candidate 6. To present, offer 7. To start from cover, as game 8. To sheathe the sword, be at peace 9. [U S] To stake, as money 10. To bring forward, produce

A new spectacle was *put up* for rehearsal after Christmas

BARRETT *Between Life and Death* 148

11. To address, as a petition, submit in excuse or explanation

The coarse tyrant to whom she had been forced to *put up* petitions for time when the rent was overdue THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* li

—to **put to the plunge or plunges**. To be forced into trouble, difficulty, or danger

The Captain demanding payment of his money, *put the Prince to a great plunge*

A LOVELL tr *Trevenot's Trav* 1, 264

—to **put up a horse**. [Brit] To board a horse in a livery stable, also, to take a horse to its stable —to **put up a job**. To plan a crime or deceive, cheat, arrange to bring about some desired effect always in a bad sense

Barclay *put up a job* to ruin old Overton

*The Illus Sporting and Dramatic News* London, Aug 31, 1892.

—to **put upon**. To treat unfairly, burden, oppress with, deceive, impose upon

I have declared myself against *putting* any more grammar upon the boys

J CLARKE *Education, Youth* 84

—to **put up to**. To urge on to, incite to, as, he *put him up to* mischief, to give directions about, aid, teach

To suggest to another the means of committing a depredation, is termed *putting him up to it* VAUX *Flash Dict.*

—to **put up with**. To endure submissively, suffer without resentment

All these indignities I very patiently *put up with* P SUPPLEIN *Connaisseur* No. 100.

—to **stay put**. [U. S.] To stay in place, remain where assigned

## Q

**Q boats.** Obsolete merchant-steamers carrying concealed guns and strong crews; "Mystery boats" used during the World War as decoys for enemy submarines. Called also *Q ships*.

The use of the so called "*Q*" ships or mystery ships comprises an interesting phase of anti-submarine warfare C C GILL *Naval Power in the War*.

**Q. T., on the strict.** On the quiet, secretly, without ostentation.

Whatever I tell you is on the *Q. T.*

*Broadside Ballad, Talkative Man From Poplar. (1870).*

**quadroon or quarteroon.** One who has a quarter of negro blood; the offspring of a white and a mulatto. In early Spanish usage, one who is fourth in descent from a negro, one parent being of white blood in each generation.

**quahaug.** [Am.] The common round or hard clam of the Atlantic coast of North America: an abbreviation of the Amerind *poquauhock*.

**Quaker City.** Philadelphia, which was settled by the Quakers under William Penn.

**Quaker guns.** [U. S.] Dummy guns, intended to deceive the enemy as to the strength of a position.

They found they had been awed by a few *quaker guns*—logs of wood in position, and so painted as to resemble cannon J B JONES *A Rebel War-Clerk's Diary*

**qualify.** [U. S. Pol.] To take the oath of office, and to furnish sureties when required before entering upon the discharge of one's duties.

**quality.** The upper classes, the gentry, people of good social position, nobility: now archaic or dialectal.

Many persons of *quality* sate the whole day in their carriages

MACAULAY *History of England* VIII, ii, 273.

**quarter.** [U. S.] A silver coin of the value of a quarter of a dollar or 25 cents.

**quarter-horse.** [U. S.] A racer that plays out after the first *quarter* of a mile; hence, a person who can not keep up the pace, who lacks stamina.

**quarter, to give or show.** To be merciful or lenient; act with clemency; spare: a term said to have originated from an agreement made between the Dutch and Spaniards that the ransom of a soldier should be a *quarter* of his pay.

**quean.** [Brit.] 1. A woman, regardless of position or character; also, a bold and brazen woman; hence, a jade; hussy.

This martial scold, this modern Amazon and queen of *queans*

BYRON *Don Juan* VI, xcvi.

2. A robust and healthy lass.

It shews a kind heart in sae young a *quean*

SCOTT *Rob Roy* XXVII.

**Queen Anne or Queen Elizabeth is dead.** That is stale news, a sarcastic retort to peddlers of common talk.

What's the news, Mr Neverout? Why, Madam, *Queen Elizabeth's dead*

SWIFT *Polite Conversations* 1.

**Queen of the May.** A girl chosen to preside over May Day revels, usually in acknowledgment of her beauty or popularity.

You must wake and call me early, mother dear, . .

For I'm to be *Queen o' the May*, mother,

I'm to be *Queen o' the May*.

TENNYSON *The May Queen*.

—**queen's** (or **king's**) **carriage** or **cushion**. A seat made by two persons crossing and clasping hands, the rider holding both bearers around the neck

He was now mounted on the hands of two of the rioters, clasped together, so as to form what is called *the king's cushion* SCOTT *Heart of Midlothian* vii.

—**queen's** (or **king's**) **English**. Correct and pure English speech according to the standard acknowledged in Great Britain—**queen's heads**. [Brit.] Postage stamps so called in *Queen Victoria's* reign because they bore a likeness of her head—the **Queen's Bus**. The prison van, or Black Maria, of Queen Victoria's reign—the **Queen's Pipe**. A great oven at Victoria Docks, London, used as an incinerator of worthless tobacco or refuse of the bonded warehouses

Only refuse tobacco finds its way into the *Queen's Pipe*

WILLIAM S. WALSH *Literary Curiosities* p 937

—to turn **King's**, **Queen's** or **State's evidence**. To turn informer

**queer**. [Brit.] I. a. 1. Odd; strange; unbalanced

I could tell tales of scores of *queer* doings there THACKERAY *Barry Lyndon* XVII

2. Counterfeit; base; criminal; a generic depreciative. II. v. To spoil, outwit, perplex, cheat.

That's the third show she's *queered* this season I believe she'd sink a ship

*Free Lance* Oct. 6, 1900

—**Queer Street**. [Brit.] An imaginary street inhabited by people in difficulties, hence, any difficulty, trouble, etc

*Queer Street* is full of lodgers just at present

DICKENS *Mutual Friend* III, i.

**question** is used idiomatically in the following phrases.—a **burning question**. A matter that has excited or inflamed the public; a problem of widespread interest, a vital issue

The people like to be roused by red-hot, scorching speeches; they want *burning questions*, intolerable grievances SIR WALTER BESANT.

—in **question**. Under discussion or examination, on trial

He does not think his friend has ever seen the body in *question*

SHERIDAN *The Rivals* act i, sc. 2.

—it is a **question of**. It concerns or relates to what is needed or involved

*It was a question of time*

FREEMAN *Norman Conquest* I, iv, 223

—out of the **question**. Not to be thought of, not worthy of discussion or consideration

The third alternative was no longer open . . . for retreat was out of the *question*

BOSWELL SMITH *Carthage* 210

—to **beg the question**. See under **BEG**—to **call into question**. To summon, as for examination, to cast doubt upon, dispute, also, formerly, to investigate, examine.

A right to *call into question* . . . some exertions of power

T. POWNALL *Administration of British Colonies* I, v.

**quibble**. To evade by artifice; equivocate.

*Quibbling* about self-interest and motives . . . is but poor employment for a grown man MACAULAY *Mill on Government*.

**quick as thought** or **quick as lightning** or **a wink**. Very quick; almost instantaneously.

**quid**. 1. [U. S. Pol.] A nickname for the Republican Party, or a section of it from 1805 to 11.

He belonged to the third party, the quiddists or *quids*, being the *tertium quid*, . . . which had no name, but was really an anti-Madison movement

HENRY ADAMS *John Randolph* 182.

2. [Brit.] A guinea, a sovereign.

One *quid*, two coach wheels.

AINSWORTH *Rookwood*.

3. Something to be chewed, as tobacco, gum, etc.: a variant of *cud*.

The first lieutenant perceived . . . that he had a *quid* of tobacco in his cheek.

MARRYAT *Peter Simple* 89.

**quid pro quo**. 1. Something for something; an equivalent in return; a consideration in a contract. 2. The substitution of one thing for an-



other; also, the result of this action; a blunder or error consisting therein

I cry for mercy, 'tis but *quid pro quo*

SHAKESPEARE *I Henry VI* act v, sc 3.

**quiet, on the.** Without any publicity or discussion; without display; in an informal way.

**quietus, or quietus est.** [Brit.] A quittance; a final settlement; also, a settling blow; death; an end: formerly used as a formula in acknowledging the payment of a debt.

Who would fardels bear . . . When he might his *quietus* make with a bare bodkin.

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act iii, sc 1

**quill.** 1. A strong feather, as from a goose or swan, the point of which, when trimmed, served as a pen. 2. An author, a lawyer.

Tolerably well known, I imagine, to gentlemen of the *quill* LYTON *Pelham* xlix  
—**quill-brother, quill-driver, quill-merchant,** etc One who, formerly, wrote with a quill-pen, hence, a penman, writer, and by extension a literary hack, journalist or author In Great Britain, a clerk; hence, **quill-driving,** clerking, **to drive the quill,** to write

Some sort of slave's *quill-driving*

KINGSLEY *Hypatia* XII.

**quilting-bee.** [U. S.] A social gathering of women, as in pioneer days, for the purpose of making quilts.

The females have . . . meetings called *quilting bees*, when many assemble to work for one, in padding or quilting bed coverings or comforters

S G GOODRICH *System of Universal Geography* 107.

**quip.** A cutting remark; stinging repartee, also, an evasive reply delivered jestingly.

And notwithstanding all her sudden *quips*,

The least whereof would quell a lover's hope,

Yet, spaniel-like, the more she spurns my love,

The more it grows and fawneth on her still

SHAKESPEARE *Two Gentlemen of Verona* act iv, sc 2

—**the quip modest.** Veiled sarcasm

If I sent him word again, it was not well cut, he would send me word, he cut it to please himself This is called *the quip modest*

ALEXANDER AND CAMPBELL in *Old Play* act ii, l 113.

**quirl.** Tangle; twist; curl Also spelt **querl.**

**quirt, quarta.** [Sp.] A riding-whip of plaited rawhide.

*Quirt* is the name of the short flexible riding whip used throughout cowboy land  
The term is a Spanish one

THEODORE ROOSEVELT in *Century Magazine* April, 1888, p 854

**quit.** Leave off; give over or up, cease

**quitter.** [U. S.] One who or that which gives up or breaks down easily, as in a race; a person who lacks determination to achieve; one wanting in stamina or staying qualities.

**quits, to be.** To be even, so that neither has the advantage.

If once I find thee ranging, Hortensio will be *quit* with thee by changing

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act iii, sc. 1.

—**to cry quits.** See under **CRY**

**qui vive, to be on the.** [L.] To be on the lookout, as a sentinel, be wide awake, active, eager, or expectant.

This put us all on the *qui vive*

MARRYAT *Peter Simple* lii.

**quiz.** 1. *n.* 1. An eccentric person; an odd or whimsical character.  
2. A bit of humbug; a practical joke or hoax. 3. A questioning.

II. *v.* 1. [Brit.] To banter, joke with; puzzle; confound; also, to

ridicule. 2. [U. S.] To subject to an oral examination; interrogate; cross-question.

**quod.** [Brit.] Prison, gaol, jail. hence, **to put in or get out of quod**, to put in or get out of jail

She's grudged me a hundred pounds *to get me out of quod*

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* liv

## R

**R.** The dog's letter: so called because a dog when growling makes an *r-r-r-r* sound.

*R* that's the dog's name *R* is for the dog

SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* act ii, sc 4

—**the R months.** The months containing the letter R, September to April, when, in northern latitudes, oysters are in season. In southern latitudes oysters are eaten throughout the year

Here is no domestic news of changes and chances in the political world, which, like oysters, are only in season in the *R months*, when Parliament sits

CHESTERFIELD *Lett* ccxli.

—**the three R's.** Writing, reading, and arithmetic

**rack and ruin.** Utter destruction; complete wreck.

His academicals run to . . . utter *rack and ruin* BURNAND *My Own Time* 346

**rack, on or upon the.** In bodily torment, mental discomfort; severe pain: in allusion to an old judicial instrument for torture.

Let me choose, for as I am, I live *upon the rack*

SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice* act iii, sc 2.

A cool behaviour sets him *on the rack*, and is interpreted as an instance of aversion or indifference

ADDISON *Spectator* No. 178

**racket.** A noisy entertainment; a spree.—**to go on a racket.** To indulge in a frolic, dissipation or a spree—**to racket about, racket through.** To go the rounds at night—**to stand the racket.** To pay the score.—**to tumble to the racket.** To understand the plan or scheme.

**Racks, the.** The reaches of the Hudson river, so called by the early settlers. See Watson "Historic Tales of New York," p. 27 (1832).

**Radical.** One who holds and advocates advanced views concerning political reforms: a word that dates from the 14th century, first applied to politics in 1802, but used by Jebb in his "Life" (1786) in the phrase "The necessity of *radical* reform in the representation" (vol I p 194)

**radio.** Wireless or anything transmitted or received by wireless-telegraph or wireless-telephone.

**rag.** 1. A woman who preys on, allures, or entices men; a female vampire; vamp.

A fool there was and he made his prayer

(Even as you and I!)

To a *rag* and a bone and a hank of hair

(We called her the woman who did not care),

But the fool he called her his lady fair

(Even as you and I!)

RUDYARD KIPLING *The Vampire* (as suggested by the painting by Philip Burne-Jones)

2. *pl* Clothes, garments usually applied to worn or shabby clothing, but used with *glad* in the United States for Sunday clothes, holiday attire

3. Something resembling

a cloth, as a newspaper, or made of woven goods, as a flag, a handkerchief, or a sail

4. A subject harped on or frequently and cantankerously reverted to

5. The drop-curtain of a theater

6. A convivial unorderedly gathering

7. Rag-money; also, a farthing

8. A lad who wears ragged clothes, ragamuffin; also, a vagabond.

9. Music played in ragtime.

10. A herd of young colts

**rag** is used in various idiomatic senses in the following phrases —**glad rags**. See **rag**, 2, above —**rag-bush** or **rag-tree**. A bush or tree sacred to a deity to which it was dedicated and on which pilgrims hung rags torn from their garments as offerings —**rag-fair**. A market where second-hand clothes are sold —**rag-money**. Paper money not easily convertible into coin used in contempt —**rag-music**. Dance music in syncopated time characteristic of negro melodies

New York's imitation of negro music, also called **rag-time**, manufactured chiefly in Tin Pan Alley, syncopated, but differing from jazz q v in not wholly disregarding harmony and counterpoint

L J DE BEKKER

—**rag on every bush**. [Ir] A young man who is caught by many girls whom he courts but to whom he never proposes —**rag-tag**. The rabble —**rag-tag and bob-tail**. Ragged people collectively, vagabondage —**to chew the rag**. To harp on one string, to dwell on or revert incessantly to (a)subject —**to rag**. To tease annoy; also, to wrangle —**to rag out** or **up**. [U S] To dress in fine clothes, array or adorn

**ragamuffin**. A tattered vagabond, hence, ragged, beggarly, disorderly, of ill repute

Be not afraid, Lady, to speak to these *ragamuffins*

DRYDEN *Don Sebastian* act IV, sc 2

**rage, all the**. 1. The fashion or mode; sometimes contracted to **the rage**.

You don't know how charming it is, and it will be *all the rage*

A TROLLOPE *Three Clerks* xxxv.

2. Something sort with eagerness, or ardent desire, an absorbing passion

In our day *the rage* for accumulation has apotheosized work

SPENCER *Social Statues* 178

**raglan**. A loose overcoat with large sleeves (sometimes sleeveless), and a cape: named from Lord Raglan, Fitzroy J. H. Somerset, a British general in the Crimean War (1788-1855).

**ragout**. A piquant or spicy combination, something highly seasoned, as a dish of meat and vegetables stewed.

A mere *ragout*, toss'd up from the offals of other authors CIBBER *Apology* I, 34.

**ragshag**. A person dressed in rags, as for a masquerade.

**railroad**. [U. S.] To expedite or put through speedily; rush or hurry; hustle along

It is not good legislation to *railroad* bills through the house without full and intelligent discussion

Missouri Republican Feb 22, 1888

The effort is to *railroad* Mr Calhoun to prison at any cost

New York Evening Post May 31, 1909

**rain** is used with various senses in the following phrases —**it never rains but it pours**. Misfortune never comes alone: applied also of good fortune never coming without some ill fortune follows

As *it never rains but it pours*, news of another disaster was rife in the city in the evening

EARL DUNMORE *Pamors* I, 292

—**not to know enough to get out of the rain**. To be unsophisticated used also without the negative, and then with positive force

Ham was one of 'em—he was He *knew sufficient to get out of the rain*

DURIVAGE *Stray Subjects* 95

—**rainy day**. A time of distress or one in which misfortunes may come, any day of trouble or need —**to lay up for a rainy day**. To put aside for future use or save for a day of need, be thrifty —**to rain cats and dogs, rain pitchforks**. To rain very heavily

**rainbow**. An illusive attraction or deceptive allurements; any fanciful or visionary enterprise.—**rainbow-chaser**. One given to visionary plans —**rainbow-chasing**. The pursuing of fanciful plans or visionary aims

**Rainbow Division**. [U. S.] A body of troops representative of the United States; specifically, the division of National Guard units from 27 States

which was the first to join the American Expeditionary Forces to France in 1917 to fight in the World War.

**raise, n.** An increase, as of wages.

**raise, v.** 1. To cause to rise; hoist; elevate; erect. 2. To cause to swell up or puff out, as dough with yeast in baking. 3. To bring up, as phlegm from the throat. 4. To bring into view, as the horizon by sailing toward it. 5. To advance, as in position. 6. To make more prominent, increase, as in the estimation of others, make more noted. 7. To show admiration for or of, praise. 8. To cultivate or direct the growth of, grow, produce, as crops, fruits, plants, etc., breed live-stock, rear.

The Chickasaw Indians *raise* abundance of small cattle, hogs, turkeys, etc.

B. ROMANS *Florida* p. 93

In Kentucky we breed cattle and horses and mules, and *raise* children.

*Washington Post* quoting from "The Memoirs" of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, cited in Walsh's "Handy-Book of Literary Curiosities," p. 948.

9. To collect or obtain, by effort or measure, as, a fund or an army. 10. To educate and train for a special calling, profession or purpose, as, teachers, nurses, etc. 11. To give voice to loudly, as in warning. See **TO RAISE THE HUE AND CRY**, below. 12. To cause or bring about, evoke, originate, introduce, bring to attention, as, to *raise* a laugh; *raise* a question. 13. To summon or call up, cause to become manifest, as, to *raise* a specter. 14. To arouse or excite to action, as, to *raise* a people in the defense of their city. 15. To drive from cover, as a hare or a fox in hunting. 16. To put to an end as by relief, as, to *raise* a blockade or siege.

**raise** is used in other senses than "to cause to rise, elevate, or move upward," in the following idiomatic phrases — **to raise a bobbery, Cain, the devil, the dickens, the mischief, Ned, the roof off, a racket, a row, a rumpus**, etc. To cause a riot, make a great disturbance, stir up confusion, a violent agitation or conflict — **to raise a check or note**. To increase the amount for which it is drawn by fraudulent alteration — **to raise a house or building**. [U. S.] To erect into position and fasten together the sides and ends of the frame — **to raise more hogs and less hell**. To attend to one's calling and not interfere in politics or public affairs, to stick to one's last.

It was Roswell G. Horr of Michigan who first used the phrase *to raise more hogs and less hell*. He was a Member of Congress in the early 80's, and it was to the Southern members that he gave this advice.

CHARLES M. PEPPER in *The Sun* New York, Aug. 2, 1922.

— **to raise a mouse or put a mouse on a stay**. [Naut.] To strike a person so as to cause a swelling — **to raise money on**. To obtain money by borrowing or pawning — **to raise one's back, bristles or dander**. [U. S.] To rouse one's wrath — **to raise one's hair**. To scalp one, also, to frighten, scare — **to raise steam**. To get or produce steam, as in a boiler, so as to start a steam-engine — **to raise the dust**. To procure ready money — **to raise the hue and cry**. To make a great noise by shouting as in warning — **to raise the market upon**. To overcharge — **to raise the wind**. 1. To make a commotion. 2. Same as **TO RAISE THE DUST**.

**raison d'être**. [F.] Literally, a reason for being; a reason or excuse for existing.

Plunder in three forms . . . was the very *raison d'être* of the power of the [East India] Company. MORLEY *Burke* 208

**rake or rakehell**. [Brit.] A dissolute or immoral person; a libertine; blackguard.

The wild son of a baronet, a *rake-hell* who had been brought up at Eton.

THORNBURY *Tour of England* I, ii, 43.

**rake off**. [U. S.] 1. A share of profits. 2. Unlawful profit; illicit commission; graft.

Business is rotten. Everybody from office boy up, wants a *rake-off* or tip.

*Living Church* Sept. 10, 1910

**rake one over the coals**. See under **COAL**.

**rake up.** To revive or bring up again, as a quarrel, grievance, etc.—**rake up the fire.** To prepare a fire for the night by adding new fuel and covering with ashes to retard combustion.

The fire that burneth bright all day, and at night is *raked up* in his ashes  
*Book of Merry Riddles* (1629)

**rakish.** Dissolute; hence, dashing, jaunty.

**ralliance.** A unification of interests; rallying. A term coined by Thomas Jefferson. See quotation.

The good Old Dominion, the mother of us all, will become a centre of *ralliance* to the States whose youth she has instructed  
THOMAS JEFFERSON *Works* IX, 509.

**rally.** [U. S.] A mass-meeting for a common purpose, or a field-meet with outdoor activities; as, a boy-scout *rally*.

**ramble-scramble.** Lacking system or method; confused, jumbled.

**rambunctious.** [U. S.] Rude and boisterous; unruly, turbulent. Classed as an Americanism by Thornton, the word has many variants such as *rambustious* and *rumbustious*, in British use.

The sea has been rather *rambustious*, I own  
FOOTE *Trip to Calais* (1778)

**ram-headed.** Thick-headed; stupid.

**ramp.** [Eng.] 1. A footpad. 2. A bold and noisy woman. 3. A swindle.

**rampage.** 1. [Brit.] Boisterous agitation or excitement; a dashing about with anger or violence: usually in the phrase **on a or the rampage**.

She leaves his charming society to go off *on a wild rampage* through the country.  
*Black Adventures of a Phaeton* XI, 147.

2. [U. S.] In a state of boisterous or violent intoxication.

**rampallian.** A rampant, roistering fellow.

Away, you scullion, you *rampallian*, you fustillarian!

SHAKESPEARE *II Henry IV* act II, sc 1.

**rampant.** Wild; unrestrained; boisterous.

**ranch, ranche, rancho.** [U. S.] 1. A farm on which sheep, horses or cattle are bred or alfalfa is grown. 2. The farm-buildings. 3. The employees or outfit of such a farm.

The American herder speaks of his companions collectively as *the ranch* or the outfit.  
*Scribner's Magazine* II, 500.

**rand.** [S. Afr.] A highland or the highlands on either side of a river valley.—**the Rand.** An auriferous ridge near Johannesburg in the Transvaal: a contraction of *Witwatersrand*.

**ranger.** 1. One who roams over a territory to plunder, pillage or waste; a prowling robber. 2. An official, as a warden or gamekeeper, in charge of a forest tract or game preserve. 3. One of an armed band of soldiery who protected large tracts of country.

**rank.** 1. Not easily managed; untractable; restive, as a horse. 2. Eager; impatient. 3. Coarse; obscene. 4. Having overfulness of blood; hence, in heat; inflamed with desire; lustful. 5. Foul, noisome—**rank-brain.** A person who lacks self-control, one unable of concentration, a giddy, senseless person.—**rank-brained.** Thoughtless; giddy.

**rank and file.** The common soldiers, or the privates and the sergeants and the corporals who stand in the ranks and files; hence, those who form the bulk or general mass of any body of persons, community, society, or party.

—**in the ranks.** Serving as a private soldier —**to fill the ranks.** To complete the number required —**to rise from the ranks.** To receive promotion from a subordi-

nate position, win a commission from the position of a non-commissioned officer or private—to take rank of. To enjoy precedence over.—to take rank with. To be the equal of, be considered as good as

**ranker.** [Brit.] A commissioned officer who, having enlisted as a private, has risen from the ranks.

The new Coast battalion, most of whose officers are *rankers*

*St James's Gazette* London, June 2, 1886

**ransom.** 1. [R-] The sacrifice of Christ on the Cross; atonement; expiation. 2. [Scot.] An exorbitant price or rate.

**rant.** 1. To be uproariously gay. 2. To speak loudly and boisterously; to declaim with needless vehemence and bombast; rave; storm; brag.

Look where my *ranting* host of the Garter comes

SHAKESPEARE *Merry Wives* act 1, sc. 1.

**ran-tan.** 1. A clamor or banging noise. 2. A riotous carousal  
—on the ran-tan. In a state of noisy or boisterous excitement; uproariously gay; on the spree

For the one word drink . . . I find . . . on the ran-tan

DICKENS in *Household Words* Sept. 24, 1853

**rantipole.** 1. A wild, frolicsome, romping child. 2. A reckless and rude young fellow. 3. A seesaw.

**rantum-scootum.** [U. S.] Light-headed; frivolous.

**ranz-des-vaches.** [F] The call of the cows, an air or flourish on an Alpine horn: from the ranks or rows in which the cattle move homeward when they hear it.

**rap out.** 1. To express by means of raps; as, the medium said the spirits would *rap out* a communication. 2. To utter forcibly, as, to *rap out* an oath; also, to speak with a sharp and short delivery.

Adams then *rapped out* an hundred Greek verses FIELDING *Joseph Andrews* III, ii

**rapscallion.** A good for nothing rascal, a worthless wretch; a scamp, vagabond

But the poor *rapscallion* had a heart larger than many honest painstaking men

LYTTON *Lucretia* I, x.

**rara avis.** [L] Literally, a rare bird; anything rare, a wonder. The *rara avis* of the Roman poets was a black swan.

Supashad was indeed a *rara avis* among English-speaking khitmutgars [table-servants] being very intelligent, and only a moderate thief *The Mistletoe Bough* 1886.

**rare.** [U. S.] Not roasted or broiled sufficiently to lose its redness or juices: said especially of beef The modern British equivalent is *underdone*, but *rare* was used in this sense by English writers during the first half of the 18th century, and is still found in dialect The word is from the Anglo-Saxon *hrære*, raw, *hrêr*, half-cooked

The meal was in all cases a little *rare* at its centre

M DONOVAN *Domestic Economy* II, 289

**raspberry.** A noise emitted in contempt (see quotation); hence, an indication of disapproval.

The tongue is inserted in the left cheek and forced through the lips, producing a peculiar squashy noise that is extremely irritating It is termed, I believe, a *raspberry*, and when not employed for the purpose of testing horseflesh, is regarded rather as an expression of contempt than of admiration

*The Sporting Times*, London, 1880, quoted by Farmer and Henley in "Slang and Its Analogues"

—to get the raspberry. To be dismissed with sounds of disapproval See the quotation given above.

**rat.** 1. [Brit.] A politician who deserts his party in a crisis, for personal advantage or safety.

This would pronounce us as having differed with him, and of course, become *rats* or deserters. EARL MALMESBURY *Duaries and Correspondence* II, 477

2. (1) A workman who accepts wages lower than the rate established (2) A craftsman who refuses to join a strike or who takes a striker's place

Loren Webster, chief ink-dauber in a *rat*-printing office at the west, nothing at all but a *rat*-printer. *The Albany Microscope* March 6, 1824

3. [Thieves' Cant] A police spy or stool-pigeon 4. [Brit.] A clergyman 5. [Austral.] A wharf loafer or street arab 6. A pirate 7. [U S.] A cushion of curled or crimped hair used by women as a puff —**rat-office.** A workshop where wages lower than the established rate are paid; especially one where union men have been displaced by non-union men — an open shop — **to smell a rat.** To suspect rascality or a trick

Mr Speaker, I *smell a rat*, I see him forming in the air and darkening the sky, but I'll nip him in the bud BARRINGTON *Personal Sketches* Sir Boyle Roche

**rattle, n.** 1. Rapid, noisy, and empty talk; chatter. 2. One given to empty talk; a chatterer — **rattlebox, rattlebrain, rattlehead, rattlepate.** One who is given to foolish chatter, a talkative, flighty person. By Cromwell's Roundheads, the Cavaliers were designated as *Rattlepates*

**rattle, v.** To disturb the self-possession of, cause perturbation of mind in; agitate; confuse.

**rattled.** [U. S.] Disconcerted; flustered, confused; also, dazed.

Girls of good physique . . . are much less likely to get *rattled*, than those who are weak and ill *Scientific American* Feb 12, 1887

**rattler.** 1. [U. S.] A rattlesnake. 2. Something out of the ordinary or exceptional of its kind. 3. An outrageous lie.

**rattletrap.** 1. A chatterbox, especially a talkative woman.

You're as great a *rattletrap* as ever.

*Life in a Debtor's Prison* 180.

2. A gewgaw; any small worthless article.

Where poor Judy kept her deeds and *rattletraps*.

LYTTON *Clifford* xxxiv, 209

**ratty.** Despicable and worthless.

**raw.** 1. A sore spot, as one where the skin is abraded. Hence, a sensitive point in the feelings. 2. A clam or an oyster served uncooked.

3. An unbroken horse — **raw deal.** [U S.] Bad treatment in general, especially in business or politics — **rawhead and bloody bones.** A bugaboo or ghostly and bloody specter with the appearance of which children formerly were threatened, a goblin

**razorback.** 1. A lean-bodied half-wild hog with long legs. 2. A large whale, the finback or rorqual — **razorbill.** A bird, the auk whose bill has a sharp edge or ridge — **razorblade.** [U S.] A long slender oyster — **razor-clam.** A clam whose shell when closed resembles a closed razor

**razzle-dazzle.** A revolving platform of the merry-go-round type on which people are carried with undulating motions. Hence, a state of giddy confusion or bewilderment.

**reach-me-down.** A garment such as those sold in second-hand or ready-made clothing stores; hand-me-down—because the goods are exposed for sale outside of the store.

The most splendid *reach-me-down* dressing gowns

THACKERAY *Philip* XXIV.

**read between the lines.** To discover by inference an idea, meaning or intention not expressed by the written words yet implied.

People who have not the shrewdness to *read a little between the lines* are grievously misled. *Manchester Examiner* Jan. 19, 1886.

**read one a lesson.** To impress upon, as by teaching, scolding or reprimanding; admonish.

To *read him a lesson* which should prevent him from doing the same thing a second time. W E NORRIS *Thurlby Hall* viii

**read out.** [U. S.] To expel from an association, a church or a party by refusing cooperation with, as by united action or by proclamation.

A good deal had been said about *reading out* of the Democratic Church members of the Democratic Party

JEFFERSON DAVIS, of Mississippi, speech in House of Representatives Feb 6, 1846

**ready money.** Cash, coin, money in hand; sometimes contracted to *ready*, and used with the definite article.

No man . . . ever thinks of borrowing money to spend so long as he has *ready money* of his own BENTHAM *Defense of Usury* III, 19

As for *the ready*, I'm like a Church-mouse,—

I really don't think there's five pounds in the house

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends, Merchant of Venice* st 7

**real.** [U. S.] Really, very; quite: an intensive frequently used with *fine, glad, good, etc*

The chaplain was the *real* grit for a parson—always doin' as held be done by, and practisin' more than he preached

—**the real.** That which is what it appears or is asserted to be, the genuine thing

**reckon.** To judge; suppose, think; consider. equivalent in the South to a New Englander's *guess* and *calculate*, but used in Great Britain since 1500, and found repeatedly in English literature

I *reckon* this always, that a man is never undone till he be hanged

SHAKESPEARE *Two Gentlemen of Verona* act II, sc 5

Some *recken* he killed himselfe with purgations

WHIOTHESELEY *Chronicle* I, 16 (1530)

For I *reckon* that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy

ROMANS viii, 18

I *reckon* you'll be selling out the whole—it's needless making two bites of a cherry

SCOTT *St Ronan's Well* X

Too much beauty, I *reckon*, is nothing but too much sun

E B BROWNING *Lord Walter's Wife* st 3

*Reckon* your pop has had too much railroad and mine on his hands to be able to even eat for the last month

GUNTER *Miss Dividend* iii

—**to reckon for.** To receive the penalty of, pay for —**to reckon on or upon.** To count on as certain, expect

He could *reckon* on no support within England itself GREENE *Short Hist* II, iv, 75.

—**to reckon with.** 1. To adjust one's differences and come to a settlement with.

2. To take into consideration —**to reckon without one's host.** See under **HOST**

**record-breaking.** Surpassing all previous achievements of the kind. —**to break or cut the record.** To excel or surpass all previous performances —**to travel out of the record.** To wander away from the facts of a case

The court are so far confined to the record, that they cannot take notice of anything that does not appear on the face of it, in the legal phrase, they cannot *travel out of the record*

CHATHAM in *Letter of Junius* Dec 1, 1770

**red** is used figuratively or otherwise in a number of terms such as the following.—**Red Book.** [Brit.] 1. A book containing a list of all persons in state offices 2. An official list of the peerage, specif, a *Royal Calendar* or *Complete Annual Register* published from 1767 to 1893, also, a similar later publication 3. A collection of Welsh folk-lore romances —**red cent.** A copper coin used emphatically, usually with a negative, to symbolize money, as, not a *red cent* will I give for the title

It was a great catch for Miss Lewison, without a *red cent* of her own

BRISTED *Upper Ten Thousand* 144.



—**red dog**. 1. A bank note bearing an indorsement stamped with red ink circulated in New York and Michigan in 1845 2. A low grade of flour —**red-eye**. [U S] Strong, cheap whisky

Corn juice, *red-eye*, obtained from the still of the deacon at whose house he preached *Missouri Republican* March 8, 1888

—**red flag**. The flag of the Anarchists, hence, the symbol of anarchism  
Mr Chamberlain sticks to the *red flag*, and apparently believes in its ultimate success *Brewer's Phrase & Fable* p 1045

—**red-handed**. In the very act, as one having hands red with blood from the committing of a crime, hence, violent, sanguinary

I did but tie one fellow, who was caught *red-handed* and in the fact, to the horns of a wild stag *Scott Ivanhoe* XXV

—**red-hot**. Showing great enthusiasm for, extreme —**red-hot poker**. The flame-flower, a plant having bright red flowers on long stems —**red-lattice phrases**. The speech of the pot-house from the use of red-latticed doors and windows as a sign that the house was duly licensed

Yet you, rogue, will ensconce your rage, your *red-lattice phrases* under the shelter of your honor *Shakespeare Merry Wives of Windsor* act ii, sc 2

—**red-letter day**. A church festival day indicated in the calendar by a red letter, hence, any happy, fortunate, or memorable day —**red liquor**. Any strong drink, specifically, whisky —**red rag**. 1. A cause of irritation, as, a *red rag* to a bull

Shakespearean clowns are believed to be *red rags* to some experienced playwrights *Saintsbury History of Elizabethan Literature*

## 2. The tongue

Stop that cursed *red rag* of yours, will you W S GILBERT *Dan'l Druce* 1

—**red ribbon**. [Brit] The crimson sash of the Order of the Bath worn by its knights, hence, the Order itself or its membership

If any vacancies should happen in the *Red Ribbon*

LORD TYRAWLY in *Buckeuch MSS* 1. 382

—**red tape**. Official or legal formality and delay from the custom of tying documents with red tape

After ceaseless ridicule of *red-tape*, the petition is for more *red-tape*

SPENCER *Study of Sociology* vii, 170

**redbreast**. A Bow Street runner from the red waistcoats worn by them

They were the forerunners of the police and won fame as thief-catchers.

**reed, a broken or bruised**. [Biblical] Support not to be trusted, something too weak to be of use.

In both cases have white men found that the negro ally was a *broken reed*

*Nineteenth Century* November 1887

Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this *broken reed*, on Egypt, whereon, if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it *Isaiah* xxxvi, 6

A *bruised reed* shall he not break *Isaiah* xlii, 3

**reef, to let out, or take in a**. 1. To unfasten a button or let out a belt, or the reverse. 2. To abate or increase the terms of an offer or demand.

3. To increase or shorten sail the original sense.

**reel**. A spool or rotating device for winding cord, fiber, motion-picture film, yarn, etc.—**off the reel, or right off the reel**. Without hesitation or intermission

[The story] seems to me to be so constituted as to require to be read *off the reel*  
DICKENS *Letters* Feb 20, 1866

—**to reel off**. To recite or say easily and fluently

**refresher**. [Brit] A barrister's daily fee after being paid his retainer.

The late Sir Charles Russell was familiar with fees of 1,000 guineas a brief and refreshers of 100 guineas a day *The Evening Standard* London, Feb 16, 1901

**refusal, to have the**. To be given the first offer of; have anything placed at one's disposal as a matter of right or privilege.

If any of his subjects hath any precious stone of value, and make not him the offer of it, it is death to him, he must have the *refusal* of all *PURCHAS Pilgrimage* V, xvi.

**regard** is used with especial significance in the following phrases:—**court of regard**. An official survey of mastiffs in England, formerly held every three years, for maiming their feet so as to prevent them from hunting deer—in regard. Considering that, because—in regard to or with regard to. In so far as concerns, with relation to

**Regrets, Land of.** India.

**Regulator.** 1. [Western U. S.] A member of an improvised committee of persons who, in the absence or failure of regular lawful authority, take it upon themselves to preserve order and punish crime, also, sometimes, a member of a band of highwaymen. 2. [Eng.] One of a committee appointed by James II in 1687, to investigate and remodel the constitutions of certain boroughs for the purpose of influencing the result of the parliamentary elections. 3. [North Carolina, U. S.] (1) A member of any of several bands or committees (existing 1767-1771) formed to resist extortion. (2) One of the backwoodsmen assembled by Josiah Martin, a royal governor, in 1776, in the War of Independence, to recover North Carolina. We learn from North Carolina that the people in that Province who stile themselves *Regulators*, tied the Sheriff of Orange County to a tree, and gave him 500 lashes; they likewise obliged him to Eat the Writ they found in his Possession

Boston Weekly News-Letter May 4, 1769

**Rehoboam.** A shovel-hat worn by a cleric

**reins, to give the.** To release from control, to allow free motion or action. Used also, with opposite meaning in **to take the reins**, that is, to undertake the management or direction of.

**reliable.** Trustworthy, safe, sure, in which reliance or confidence may be put. Used in these senses since 1569. See quotation.

The word *reliable* has been sharply challenged, but seems to have established its place in the language. The objection to its use on the ground that the suffix *able* can not properly be added to an intransitive verb is answered by the citation of such words as *available*, *conversable*, *laughable*, and the like, while, in the matter of usage, *reliable* has the authority of the foremost of recent English writers

FUNK AND WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary* p 2081.

He seems to think the *reliable* chronology of Greece begins before its *reliable* history  
GLADSTONE in *Oxford Essays* 49

**remainder.** That part of an edition of a book which remains on a publisher's hands after the demand for it has ceased.

**remedy.** [Eng.] A half-holiday in certain public schools, as St. Paul's, Winchester, etc.—**remedy of the mint.** An allowance made at a mint for deviation from the exact standard of weight and fineness. Sometimes called *the tolerance of the mint*

**remember one to.** Convey the regard of one person to another by reminder—used in messages to express friendly remembrance or regard.  
**remittance-man.** One who depends upon money sent from home for his income

He was what is called in the colonies a *remittance man*

*Pall Mall Gazette* London Feb. 10, 1886

*Remittance men* never do any good BEATRICE HARRADEN *Remittance Men* p 185

**removed.** Separated by intervening relationship, of distant consanguinity by a degree of descent, as a cousin **once removed**, a second cousin, or the cousin of one's parents, or the children of one's full cousin

My grandfather's brother's daughter rabbit! I have forgot the degree, but this I know that he and I are cousins *seven times removed* SMOLLETT *Roderick Random* xviii

**renege.** 1. To fail to follow suit when one has cards of the suit led when required to do so by the rules of the game. Commonly pro-

nounced *renig*. 2. To deny; decline; renounce. 3. To fail to keep a promise.

**reptile press.** The subsidized newspaper-press and the periodicals that sell their news columns and editorial influence, given vogue by Bismarck ("reptilien presse") during a speech in the Reichstag, Feb. 9, 1876.

The semi-official and *reptile press* . . . employed to insinuate charges against the Chief of Staff

*The Times* London Nov 23, 1886.

**respects, to pay one's.** To pay a courtesy call; to show polite attention.

When he came home, he showed great eagerness to pay his respects to his master

SMOLLETT *Humphrey Clinker* 188

**resurrectionist.** [Brit.] A body-snatcher; one who violates graveyards to supply bodies for dissection.

The *resurrectionists* were at their foul work, and the graveyard, the place of repose, was itself no longer a sanctuary

MACDONALD *Alci Forbes* LXVII

**resurrection pie.** [Brit.] A meat pie made of remnants of an earlier meal.

He gave us *resurrection pie*.

He called it beefsteak—O my eye!

*Cornhill Magazine* April, 1884.

**return to our mutton, to.** To go back to the point under discussion: from Blanchet's old French play, *Maistre Pierre Pathelin*. Defending an alleged sheep stealer, the lawyer was charged by the prosecution with stealing a piece of cloth. This charge, oft repeated, brought from the court the above phrase, in French "*Mais, mon ami, revenons à nos moutons*." Rendered also to *return to our sheep*

**rhino or rino.** [Brit Slang] Ready money, but generic for money.

And to sum up the whole in the shortest phrase I know,

Beware of the Rhine, and take care of the *Rhino*

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Leg* Sir Rupert the Fearless.

**rib.** [Brit.] A wife; hence, **crooked rib**, a scolding wife.

How many have we known whose heads have been broken by their own *rib*

HALL *Salomon's Divine Arts* (1609).

**ribbons, to handle or take the.** [Sporting.] To drive; to hold the reins; hence, to direct or do the guiding.

I was surprised to see my factotum mount the box and take the ribbons in his hand

LE FEVRE *Leif Trav Phys*

Otherwise, I have no doubt, I should have been able to take a place in any hippodrome in the world, and to *handle the ribbons* (as the high, well-born lord used to say) to perfection

THACKERAY

**rib-roast, to baste or tickle one's.** To beat with a cudgel; punish, thrash; hence, **rib-roaster, rib-roasting**, etc.

**Richmond in the field, another.** Another and unexpected adversary: from the Shakespearian phrase.

I think there be *six Richmonds in the field*. Five I have slain to-day instead of him.

SHAKESPEARE *Richard III* act v, sc 4.

**ride for a fall.** To ride a race to lose it intentionally.

**rifle.** A series of ripples; hence, rapids.

The two streams, the clear and the muddy, run side by side for nearly twenty miles when a series of *rifles* and sharp turns mingles them freely in a fluid of pale orange tint.

J H BEADLE *Western Wilds* p 206,

**rifle, to make the.** [U. S.] To make a successful crossing of a rapids, hence, to succeed.

I don't want to kill a man fer jest tryin' to steal, and not makin' the *rifle*

W. N HARBEN *Abner Daniel* 320

**rift in or within the lute.** A defect that causes discord; any blemish that disturbs the harmony: from a flaw, break, crack, or split in the sounding-body of a lute.

It is the little *rift within the lute*  
That by-and-by will make the music mute.

TENNYSON *Idylls of the King* 386

**rig.** 1. Banter; chaff; ridicule. 2. A prank or frolic; any wanton mischief. 3. A swindle or swindling trick.—**rig sale.** A sale by auction under false pretenses.—**to run a rig.** To play a prank, indulge in a frolic.

He little dreamt when he set out  
Of *running such a rig*

COWPER *John Gilpin* 25.

—**to rig the market.** To manipulate the market by either raising or lowering prices artificially, i. e., without reference to the actual value of the security or commodity traded in, in order to derive a profit.

**right** occurs in various senses in the following idioms.—**by rights.** By reason or virtue of; in strict justice; properly.

I should not, *by rights*, speak in this tone to you KEATS *Letters in Works* III, 159

—**in one's own right.** By reason of personal possession or privilege —**of right.** That can be demanded as a right, as of course, not to be denied or questioned, as, this is a matter of *right*, and not within the discretion of the court —**right along.** [U S] Without ceasing, continuously —**right and left.** On all sides —**right as a trivet.** Right as a glove, as sixpence; safe and sound, in a satisfactory condition; all right

"I hope you are well, Sir" "*Right as a trivet, sir,*" replied Bob Sawyer

DICKENS *Pickwick* 1.

—**right away.** At once, without delay, immediately, right off

A round man cannot be expected to fit a square hole *right away* He must have time to modify his shape

MARK TWAIN *More Tramps Abroad* lxxi

—**right hand.** Principal assistant, main source of reliance or dependence

Little Peter was her *right hand* man

MARRYAT *Poacher* xxii

—**right here.** [U S] Now, exactly, precisely at the moment or place, at this or that time, on this or that spot

"I got on the trail *right there,*" pursued Mr Stanley, with a momentary lapse into American idiom

Westminster Gazette London, Jan 2, 1896

—**right off, or now.** [U S] At once —**right of continuity.** Constructive authority claimed over a larger territory than that actually occupied —**right of way.**

The right, general or special, of a person to pass over the land of another who is owner of the fee, by extension, in Melbourne, Victoria, an alley or narrow street —**right side up with care.** [U S] In perfect condition, as if the phrase, originally a shipping label attached to "bottled goods," had been lived up to rigorously throughout the course of transit —**right smart.** [U S] A large quantity, a great number, a good deal

I asked whether the people made much maple sugar [in Virginia] when the planter answered, "Yes, they do, I reckon, *right smart,*" meaning in large quantities

BUCKINGHAM *Slave States* II, 327

—**to bring, put or set to rights.** To set in order, arrange, adjust, rectify, also, to cure or repair

I received the watch chain which you say you send to be *put to rights*

FRANKLIN *Letters, Works* IV, 23

The lists of voters were *set to rights* BRYCE *American Commonwealth* III, 216

How the good should be secured, and the ill *brought to rights* was the difficulty

THOMAS JEFFERSON *Autobiography* I, 109.

—**to do one right.** To do one justice, also, to pledge in drink —**to have one dead to rights.** [U S] To have one at a disadvantage —**to put or set to rights.** To place in order, clear up —**to send to the right-about.** To dismiss summarily, send about one's business, turn away

One of the members was unseated with ignominy and *sent to the right about*

MRS HENRY WOOD *East Lynne* 326.

**rigmarole.** [Brit.] A rambling, tedious tale or statement; hence, any nonsensical story told in a roundabout way.

In that manner vulgarly, but significantly, called *rigmarole*

BOSWELL Johnson I, 191, note

**riple.** To stir to anger; annoy, disturb, irritate.

What vexed and *ripled* him (to use his own expression), was the infernal indifference and cowardly ingratitude of Clavering

THACKERAY *Pendennis* LXIV.

**rime or reason, without.** Wanting in both sense and reason; having no valuable quality. Sometimes used in the form **neither rime nor reason.**

These songs . . . seeme but simple stuffe, and composed *without rime or reason*

HOLLAND *Livy* XXVII, XXXVII, 656

**Rimmon, to bow down in the house of.** To conform, for political or social reasons, to religious ceremonies of which one disapproves.

*II Kings* v, 18.

**ring, n.** A combination of persons for the control of stocks or bonds, products or the like so as to regulate the market price; hence, a combination or clique for the control of politics for selfish ends.

Experience has shown that the operation of these trusts or *rings* or syndicates, is completely baneful

*The Scotsman* 1880.

Stocks are what the brokers make them, and their varying rate is determined by a

*ring*

J H BROWN *Great Metropolis* 48 (1869).

**ring, v** 1. [Brit. & U. S.] To hem in game or cattle by beating or riding around them in a circle; to shut in, enclose.

To try our hand at the grand hunting manoeuvre which is called "*ringing* the wild horse"

WASHINGTON IRVING *Tour Prairies* XXV.

2. [Australia.] To round up cattle.

The cattle were uneasy, and "*ringed*" all night

BOLDREWOOD *Melbourne Mem* 20.

**ringer.** 1. One who repeats, in politics, a repeater or person who votes more than once at the same election 2. On the turf, a horse fraudulently entered for a race, hence, any person or thing entered in a competition under misrepresentation 3. [Australia.] One who shears the greatest number of sheep in a day in a shed

**ringleader.** One who organizes or leads an association, a party, mob, etc., in any enterprise: used usually with the implication of unlawfulness.

**ring off!** [U. S.] Quit; stop: a phrase derived from the former practise of notifying a telephone central that one has finished speaking. It was done by ringing a bell with which, in telephones of early make, one called up central to be connected with a number or to be disconnected when one's message was delivered

**ring one's own bell.** To do one's own trumpeting abroad; be one's own publicity agent; blow one's own horn.

**ringster.** [U. S.] A member of a ring.

The *ringsters* at Harrisburg . . . oppose the consideration of a Tax bill

*The Philadelphia Record* No 3428 (1881)

**ringtailed roarer.** [U. S.] A braggart; a blowhard; also, a fellow of great size and strength. Sometimes varied to *real roarer* and *ringtail snorter*.

I'm a *ringtailed roarer* from Big Sandy River I can outrun, outjump, and outfight any man in Kentucky

*The New Haven Palladium* Aug 25, 1830.

**ring the changes.** To repeat something with every possible variation in language or illustration.

**Riot Act, to read the.** [Brit.] To give warning to; call up for reprimand; reprove; rebuke. Literally, to give notice to a crowd to disperse under penalty of the law, by proclaiming the provisions of the riot act.

After reading the riot act, and ordering them to disperse, any number of persons remaining should . . . incur the penalty of the law, that of felony

PITT in T Browne *British Cicero*.

**rip** is used idiomatically in a **precious rip**, a **regular rip** and a **rip of a fellow** to designate a boisterous, care-free and indifferent person.—a **sad rip**. A dissipated or depraved person.

**rip up old grievances or sores.** To call back to recollection griefs suffered or ill endured.

**ripper.** [Brit.] One who or that which is of superior character or quality; anything especially good. Specifically, a handsome woman, an efficient man, a knockout blow in pugilism, a good ball in cricket, a whopping lie.

"But, he is a *ripper*, nevertheless," said the Lieutenant, touching the animal with his whip

LANG *Wand India* 144

**ripping.** [Brit.] Very fine; exceptional; great; splendid; excellent; jolly

What a *ripping* race it was

HAWLEY SMART *Post to Finish* 1

**rise from the ranks.** To win a commission from the ranks, as a non-commissioned officer or enlisted man; hence, to advance from a subordinate position to one of responsibility.

**rise to the emergency or occasion.** To prove equal to dealing with an unexpected occurrence or event.

**river-rat.** [U. S.] A riverside thief.

Observe the *river-rats* clustering about the *groceries*

Harper's Magazine (1884) 513, 1.

**R. M. D.** [Brit.] Ready money down.

**road.** The highway with the definite article, the occupation of the footpad or the highwayman — **in the road.** In the way; causing an obstruction — **to take the road.** 1. To become a tramp or vagabond 2. To set out on a journey, as a commercial traveler — **to take to the road.** To become a highwayman

**road-agent.** [U. S.] 1. A highway robber; highwayman.

It could hardly be expected that a well-traveled road like this, over which so much treasure was being transported, should be free from the inquisitive eye of the *road agent*.

HASKINS *Argonauts of California* 208

2. A commercial traveler; drummer.

**roadster.** 1. One who travels along a road in the pursuit of his calling, as a coach-driver or road-agent. 2. A hunting horse that keeps to the road instead of following the hounds in the chase. 3. A motor-car, bicycle or tricycle built for road use rather than for track-racing.

**road up.** To cause to take wing, as birds when tracked by scent with dogs.

**roaring forties.** [Naut.] A stormy region of the North Atlantic between degrees 40 and 50: sometimes used of the same zone in the South Atlantic.

They found the *Roaring Forties* quite strong enough for them

J A BARRY *Stee Brown's Bunyip* 165

**roaring game.** [Scot.] Curling: with the definite article.

**roast**<sup>1</sup>. Severe criticism in disparagement or reproof; a call over the coals.

**roast**<sup>2</sup>. To stir anger in as by banter or chaff, tease or reprove; ridicule, jest at or quiz mercilessly. Hence, **roaster**, a severe critic; also, one given to stirring anger in.

Let them but lay a finger on my "Medea," and I'll give them such a *roasting* as they haven't had since the days of the "Dunciad."

WHITE MELVILLE *General Bounce* xiii.

**roast meat, to cry**. To proclaim one's good fortune or success.

**rob Peter to clothe, give to or pay Paul**. To take or borrow money from one to give or pay to another. There is no connection between this saying and the abbey church of St Peter, Westminster, in relation with St. Paul's Cathedral, London, as suggested by Brewer

Lord, how schulde God approve that thou *robbe Petur and gif this robbere to Poule* in the name of Crist? WYCLIF *Select Works* III, 174 (1380)

Those that, as we say, *rob Peter to pay Paul*, and take the Bread out of their Master's mouths to give it to strangers L'ESTRANGE *Fables* 217.

**robe, the or the long**. The legal or the clerical profession as distinguished from the **short robe**, "all that profess arms or usually wear swords."

Our learned men of *either robe*

STEELE *Spectator* No. 157.

They have spared no Orders of Men, *the long Robe* as well as the *Short* hath felt their fury. RUSHW *Hist Coll* II, iii, 137.

**Robin Hood's barn, around**. In a roundabout way to attain one's end or a result desired.

**robustious**. Boisterous; also, of robust character, as, *robustious* merriment.

**rock**. 1. [U. S.] A coin: in the plural, money. 2. [Brit.] (1) A hard cheese made from skimmed milk. (2) [Cornwall.] A lump of ore.—**on the rocks**. In distress, hence, lacking funds, hard up, needy—**rock-bottom**. [U. S.]

The ultimate or very lowest point from the stratum of rock at the bottom of a well which prevents further excavation. Hence, **rock-bottom price**, the lowest price possible—**rocks ahead!** Danger ahead a warning to steer clear of impending disaster

**rocky**. [U. S.] Unsteady or dizzy, as if rocking, shaky, under the weather.

**rogue's march or tattoo**. The music played in derision of a person who is driven out of a camp or community in disgrace.

To have him drummed out of the parish to the *rogue's tattoo*

BLACKMORE *Perlycross* 81.

**Roland for an Oliver**. Tit for tat; forcible retaliation; to match one improbable story with another: from the practise of old romancers of exaggerating the achievements and exploits of knights so named. Roland, a nephew of Charlemagne, is the hero of the *Chanson de Roland*, which also gives the exploits of his friend *Oliver*.

By the help of some two-penny Scribbler she will always return him a *Roland* for his *Oliver*. WARD *Wooden World* 68

**rolling off a log, as easy as**. [U. S.] Accomplished without difficulty, very easy.

**rolling stone gathers no moss, a**. A restless and wandering person makes no money; the journeyman remains poor.

**roll up**. 1. To amass, as wealth. 2. [Australia.] To assemble, as a crowd of persons for a meeting.

**roly-poly, a**. [Brit.] 1. Round and fat, in the form of a jam-roll pudding.

Cottages in the doors of which a few *roly poly*, open eyed children stand.

MRS CRAIK *Agatha's Husband* XII.

2. Pudgy, coarse or low.

**polly-polly**, *n.* A jam-roll pudding.

**romance**. To draw upon the imagination, exaggerate, invent or tell fictitious or extravagant stories after the style of romances.

How strangely some vain people, when they are upon this bragging strain, will *romance* upon themselves and their families

NORRIS *Treat Humility* vii, 304

**Roman holiday**. A day of amusement in ancient Rome characterized by gladiatorial contests and other bloody games, hence, enjoyment or profit whereby others suffer

Butcher'd to make a *Roman holiday*

BYRON *Childs Harold* canto iv, st 141.

**Rome was not built in a day**. Great achievements require much time; nothing worth while can be done in haste

**romp**. A girl given to boisterous frolic; a tomboy

**romp in or home**. To win easily, as a race.

I recall his recent half mile at Oxford, when he *romped home* in the easiest possible manner

*Sporting Life* London, March 20, 1891.

**rook**. [Brit] 1. A swindler, sharper, cheat especially in gaming. 2. A curate or parson

For like a *rook* at Gaming-Table,

he

cheats all sides with equal zeal

WARD *Hud Rediv* I, ix, 22

**rookie**. A raw recruit in military use

**room and to spare**. Accommodation beyond one's needs, ample room; more room than required

**rooming house**. [U. S.] A lodging-house in which rooms are rented without meals or board, furnished lodgings.

**room, to give**. To withdraw so as to yield space or opportunity to others.

**room to his company, to prefer one's**. To enjoy one's absence more than one's companionship.

**room, to make**. To draw back so as to make a passageway for.

**roorback**. [U. S.] A fictitious report or deliberate lie concerning a candidate for election circulated for political purposes before an election: so called from a political story circulated in 1844 credited to a fictitious work, "Baron Roorback's Tour Through the Western and Southern States."

Do you remember, sir, the story which was circulated in all the Federal papers of the North and West,—said to be taken, I believe, from the travels of one *Roorkback*—to this effect That the aforesaid *Roorkback* was travelling in the South, that he saw upon the banks of Duck River an encampment of negroes, with their drivers, proceeding to the Southern market, and that these negroes were branded with the initials "J. K. P.," and were the property of James K. Polk, the Democratic candidate for President of the U. S. ? This was a base forgery

MR HENLEY of Indiana, Speech in House of Representatives Dec 22, 1844

**roost, come home to**. To return as to a resting place, from the habits of domesticated fowl.

Curses are like young chickens, they always *come home to roost*

SOUTHEY *Curse of Kehama* Motto

All our mistakes sooner or later surely *come home to roost*

LOWELL *Democr* 173.

**roost, gone to**. Retired for the night; gone to bed.

**roost, to rule the**. [U. S.] To control, domineer, govern, manage or have the chief say in; to boss, as the cock o' the walk does in a poultry run. For a British phrase of almost identical meaning, see **RULE THE ROAST**.



**root.** [U. S.] To help some one as by working for him; hence, to give comfort or encouragement to by cheering, applaud.

**rooter.** [U. S.] One who gives encouragement to as by aid, applause, etc. See **ROOT**.

Perhaps no Boston player has been so dramatic an idol of the *rooters* as this genial player *The Evening Post* New York, March 4, 1909

**root hog or die.** [U. S.] Work for your living or die: an admonition to earn one's livelihood with the persistence of a hog in rooting up its food when in a state of freedom.

*Root hog or die* This is the refrain of each of the nine verses of *The Bull-Whacker's* Epic J. H. BEADLE *Life in Utah* 227.

**root of.** The origin or source of.

To the Tree

Of Prohibition, *root of* all our woe

MILTON *Paradise Lost* IX, 646.

**root of all evil.** The love of money.

1 *Timothy* vi, 10.

**rope** is used idiomatically in a number of phrases. As a verb it is used in the United States and Australia to mean, to catch with a rope; lasso. Hence, a **roper** is one who ropes—**on his or her high ropes**. In arrogant or overbearing temper, presumptuously haughty, looking down upon, a phrase derived from rope-walking or dancing in which the performer looks down on the spectators.—**rope of sand**. An illusion, something having the appearance of strength, but in reality useless.

Sweden and Denmark, Russia and Prussia, might form a *rope of sand*, but no dependence can be placed on such a maritime coalition

JOHN ADAMS *Works* IX, 87 (1800)

—**to fight back to the ropes**. To oppose to the bitter end, a phrase borrowed from the prize-ring —**to fight with a rope around one's neck**. To enter a contest in which defeat means death

You must send in a large force, for as he *fights with a rope round his neck*, he will struggle to the last

KINGSTON *Three Admirals* VIII

—**to rope in or into**. [U. S.] To entice, ensnare, decoy, lure or inveigle, as a youngster to a gambling-house, or other evil resort Hence, **roper-in**, a runner for gambling-houses, etc

The visitors to these establishments are chiefly strangers in the city, who are lured, or *roped into* them, by agents of the proprietors

MCCABE *New York* xxxix

**rose between two thorns.** A beautiful woman sitting between two men.

**rosebud.** A debutante.

A *rose-bud* set with little wilful thorns,

And sweet as English air could make her, she TENNYSON *Princess* Prologue.

**rot.** [Brit.] 1. Twaddle; bosh, nonsense; humbug. 2. Trashy nonsensical sentiments or foolish pastimes

I thought he despised ballet dancing, yet this is the third time I have seen him looking on at this rot

M. E. BRADDON *Cloven Foot* IV

**rotter.** [Brit.] An undesirable person, especially one characterized by moral turpitude

A regular *rotter*, that man is about as bad as they make 'em

MOORE *Esther Waters* XXXIX

**rough** is used idiomatically in a number of phrases—**rough and ready**.

Produced on the instant and without forethought, not elaborately ordered, or finished, but good enough said of a person ready to take things as they come, or of things done off hand

The *rough and ready* style which belongs to a people of sailors, foresters, farmers and mechanics

EMERSON *Cond. Life* ii, 39

—**rough customer**, **rough-neck**, **rough-scuff**, **rough-skin**, etc. A ruffianly person, one whose appearance and manners are unpleasant, a tough or rowdy, one of the rabble —**to be rough on**. To bear severely on, to prove a hardship to, un-

fortunate for —to give a lick with the rough side of the tongue. To abuse, rebuke, lecture —to roughhouse, or to make a. [U S.] To create havoc, act riotously —to rough it. To live without the usual comforts and conveniences, endure impoverishments and hardships, rusticate

The expense of travelling has mounted high I am too old to rough it

SCOTT *Journal* Nov 20, 1826

**round** is used in various senses in the following phrases.—**round on.**

[Brit.] Inform against; turn on; attack.

You know I would not be such a bad lot as to round on your cousin, whatever he has done

BESANT AND RICE *Harp and Crown* xiv

—**round O.** [Brit.] 1. Nothing

Alfred told her the round O, which had yielded to "the duck's egg," the cipher set by the scorer against a player's name who is out without making a run

READ *Hard Cash* VII

2. A circle of people

The playhouse additions and omissions were all very well for the round O of admirers who went to see and to hear

*The Athenæum* London, Feb 1845

—**rounder.** [U S.] 1. A man about town; a frequenter of places of evil repute 2. A habitual criminal —to go the rounds. To circulate, as news or gossip, by communication through a group or set of persons

**Roundhead.** [Brit. Hist.] A Parliamentary as opposed to a Royalist or Cavalier in the Civil War of 1642-49, because his hair was cropped close to the head whereas the Cavaliers wore theirs long and in curls.

**round numbers.** An approximately correct number in tens, hundreds, etc., but in which units and fractions are not enumerated

**round robin.** A protest or petition to which the signatures are affixed in circular form, so that no name heads the list, and the responsibility of the signers is equally distributed

He tried to induce a large number of supporters of the government to sign a round robin desiring a change

MACAULAY *Biography* 217

**round-up.** [U. S.] To collect cattle for inspection, branding, sale; hence, to take stock. Used also as a substantive

[A ranchman's] hardest work comes during the spring and fall round-ups

ROOSEVELT *Hunting Trips* II

**roustabout.** [U. S.] A deck-hand or wharf laborer.

I want a slush-bucket and a brush, I'm only fit to be a roustabout

MARK TWAIN *Old Times on the Mississippi*

**rowdy.** [U. S.] 1. A noisy ruffian; one given to fighting and violence. 2. [Brit. Slang.] Coin, cash.

But he has got the rowdy, which is the thing

THACKERAY *Pendennis* LXXXVI

**row of pins or beans.** Something of small value or importance: usually in the phrase "It doesn't amount to a row of pins," sometimes modified to apply to persons.

"True," would be my mournful reply, "but he doesn't amount to a row of pins"

ROBERT GRANT quoted in *Edinburgh Review* 1882.

**royal royal.** A battle royal. See under BATTLE.

**royal road.** A smooth and easy way; a road without difficulties.

Learning is labour. . . Nor must we hope to find the royal road

CRABBE *The Borough* XXIV, 28.

**rub<sup>1</sup>.** [Brit.] A disturbing fact or consideration; the point or problem to be taken into account: usually with the definite article.

To sleep, perchance to dream, ay, there's the rub. SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act iii, sc 1.

**rub<sup>2</sup>.** In various senses, occurs in the following phrases — **to rub along, on.** [Brit.] To manage to exist, to live indifferently; in earlier usage, to live fairly well

We had nearly consumed all my pistoles, and now just *rubbed on* from hand to mouth

BENJ FRANKLIN *Autobiog* 73.

— **to rub down.** 1. To rub to remove perspiration and invigorate circulation, as, to rub down a horse or an athlete

Even when they have horses, they are not very particular about *rubbing* them down

DICKENS *Nich Nickleby*

2. To reduce by friction or abrasion; as, to *rub down* a board with sandpaper. 3. [Brit.] To search a person

A man who had been in prison over a year, and who must, therefore, have been *rubbed down* a thousand times

NEVILL *Penal Serv.* V, 42

— **to rub it in.** To emphasize or reiterate so as to cause annoyance or exasperation

She is for ever throwing Boston up at me, I can't get rid of Boston The other *rubs it into* me, too; but in a different way

JAMES BUNDE *of Letters* IV.

— **to rub out.** 1. To obliterate, forget

Were he once *rubbed out* of the way, all, he thinks, will be his own

SCOTT *Old Mortality* XLIII

2. To pass away or out, die

Inarticulate words reached the ears of his companions as they bent over him *Rubbed out* at last, they heard him say

RUXTON *Far West* 65

— **to rub the wrong way.** To annoy or irritate by opposition or contradiction

It is no unusual drawback, this knack of *rubbing* the hair the wrong way

WHYTE MELVILLE *White Rose* I, xxv

— **to rub up.** 1. To furbish, revive 2. To refresh the memory or recall to the mind

**rubber.** [U. S. Slang.] To turn the head about in order to see something or some one. Hence, **rubberneck**, one who turns his head from side to side to see something, an inquisitive person A term derived from the occupants of sight-seeing cars (**rubberneck-wagons**) who, passing along different thoroughfares turned their heads from one side to the other in seeing the sights

Glancing out in the dining room to see if his mother was *rubbering*

H McHUGH *John Henry* 10

**rube.** [U. S.] A rustic or farmhand; countryman; contraction of *Reuben*.

**Rubicon, to cross the.** To decide upon a hazardous and dangerous undertaking; to commit oneself irrevocably to a course of action.

The *Rubicon* was a small river separating ancient Italy from Cisalpine Gaul (the province allotted to Julius Caesar). When Caesar crossed this stream he became an invader of Italy.

BREWER *Phrase and Fable*

**ruction.** [Brit.] A row, riot, tumult, disorderly dispute: usually in the plural

*Ructions* took place care a damn what she did " and . . . he went so far as to tell his wife "he didn't

WHITE *West End* 124

**Rugger.** [Brit.] Football under the Rugby Union rules.

**rule of three.** [Arith.] A rule for finding any term of a proportion, the three others being given.

**rule the roast.** Act as leader; exercise leadership; be master: origin unknown.

**rum.** [U. S.] Alcoholic liquor in general: used opprobriously.

"*Rum* I take to be the name which unwashed moralists apply alike to the product distilled from molasses and the noblest juices of the vineyard Burgundy 'in all its sunset glow' is *rum*" . . . "Sir, I repudiate the loathsome vulgarism as an insult to the first miracle"

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES M D *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* VIII

**rum.** Odd, good, excellent, strong, fine, clever; also, bad, questionable, indifferent

"You're a *rum* 'un to look at, you are," thought Mr Weller

DICKENS *Pickwick* XVI

"Come," said Silver, struggling with his ashlen lips to get the word out, "this won't do Stand by to go about This is a *rum* start"

STEVENSON *Treasure Island* XXXI, 170

**rum hole, shop, dive, etc.** Places in which alcoholic drinks are sold  
**rum-hound.** [U. S.] A person who retains a fondness for alcoholic drink; an alcoholic addict.

**rumpus.** Noise, row, disturbance.

She is a young lady with a will of her own, I fancy    Extremely well-fitted to make  
a rumpus    ELIOT *Daniel Deronda* xii

**run, common, general, or ordinary.** Average or usual type or class.  
the generality or great majority

In the *common run* of mankind, for one that is wise and good you find ten of a  
contrary character    ADDISON *Spectator* No 287

The *general run* of laws, enacted by the superior state, are supposed to be enacted  
for its own internal government    BLACKSTONE *Comment* V, 101

**run a campaign or candidate, for office, a business.** [U. S.] 1.  
To conduct or manage a political campaign or other movement, such as  
"a drive" 2. To become a candidate for elective office.

The Reformers *ran a candidate* of their own colours

T P O'CONNOR *Beaconsfield* 46

We have never had the misfortune to *run* (or "be run," as the phrase is) for Con-  
gress    KNICKERBOCKER *Magazine* lvi, 372

3. To direct, manage or supervise an industrial, commercial or other  
enterprise

The young German Emperor is inflated with the idea that he was born to *run* the  
universe    TEXAS *Siftings* Sept 22, 1888

**run after.** To seek the company or society of; follow; to strive to catch  
or find, search after; chase; hence, **to be run after**, to be popular  
and admired

Many fine women have *run after* me    VOLTAIRE *Works* II, 32 *D Williams'* trans

To prevent their *running* blindly *after* any doctrine which might please their ear  
KEBLE *Serm* III, 44

**run down.** 1. To pursue until exhausted or captured, as a hunted animal  
or a fugitive. 2. [Naut.] To run into and cause to sink; as, the ironclad  
*ran down* a steamer. 3. To speak disparagingly of; decry; traduce. 4.  
To weaken or exhaust in health or vigor. 5. To run, work, or operate  
till the power that produces the motion is exhausted.

(1) I have been successful in *running down* my quarry

A S PALMER *Leaves from Notebook*, Preface.

(3) Was it to be wondered at if Stella looked worn out and *run down*?

MRS LYNN LINTON *My Love* II, x, 186

(5) The toys that had been set in motion for the Baby had all stopped and *run*  
*down* long ago    DICKENS *Cricket on the Hearth* II

**run for it.** To abscond, take flight, depart in haste.

We'll *run for it* like antelopes

STEVENSON *Treasure Island* XXX

**run for one's money, to have a.** [Sporting Cant.] To have the consol-  
ation that one's horse has run in its race even tho it has failed to come  
in first second, or third: a betting phrase.

**run in.** 1. To fall in arrears of payment. 2. [Printers' Cant.] To set  
without paragraphs or break-lines; to insert a word or new matter.

3. [Police Cant.] To arrest, lock-up.

She spends three times the income of her fortune without *running in* debt.

FIELDING *Tom Jones* XVIII, xiii.

I got *run in*, and was tried at Marylebone

*Autobiography of Thief*, Macmillan's Mag. XL, 506.

**run into the ground.** [U. S.] To exhaust a subject, to carry a thing to a tiresome extreme.

[A young Missouri Senator] was asked how low the mercury fell in his locality. He promptly replied, "It *run into the ground* about a foot." Hence arose the saying, "*running it into the ground*." PETER H BURNETT *Recollections* 46.

**runner.** [U. S.] A messenger, agent or tout for a bank, boat, or hotel. Men who, by getting in with the *runners* of the Bank, or by other means.

Maryland *Journal* Dec 14, 1784.  
A struggle began between the *runners* for the two boats. *Life on the Lakes* I, 31.

It was sweet to hear the cry of the *hotel runner* (a tout is here called a *runner*) "Any one for Planter's House?" DIXON *New America* 1.

**running, out of the.** [Sporting Cant.] Out of the race, scratched, disqualified.

**run of one's teeth, to have the.** [Brit.] To have free board or maintenance, usually in exchange for services.

It was the understood thing that he was to *have the run of his teeth* at Hazlehurst. MISS BRADDON *Cloven Foot* XXVIII.

**run of things.** [U. S.] The state of affairs, the circumstances.

She had the in and out of the Sullivan house, and kind o' kept the *run o' how things* went and came into it. STOWE *Oldtown Folks* 29.

**run on.** 1. [Printers' Cant.] To add new matter without paragraphing or break-line. 2. To frolic; frisk, sport; as, the youngsters *ran on* at a great rate. 3. To discourse on, refer to, relate to, to talk on.

The talk *ran* endlessly *on* the great house.

**run on (or upon) a bank.** A rush of depositors for the purpose of withdrawing funds; a panic resulting from fear of a bank's solvency.

**run out.** To become exhausted of, as, to *run out of* supplies.

The New England breed is *running out*, we are told!

LOWELL *Study Wind Great Pub Char*

A retired physician, whose sands of life had nearly *run out*. Temple Bar II, 563.  
**run over.** 1. To go over hastily, examine cursorily; as, we will *run over* the statement. 2. To overflow; as, the river has *run over* its banks; the cistern is *running over*. 3. To pass over in one's course or way; ride or drive over; as, the train *ran over* a man.

(1) "Look at it yourself". Fairford *ran over* the affidavit and the warrant.

SCOTT *Redgauntlet* XXI.

Omnibuses, which are pleasing objects to behold except when they are going to *run over* you. Punch March 2, 1872.

**run riot.** 1. To act without restraint, lawlessly, wildly. 2. To disregard limitations. 3. To grow luxuriantly.

(1) Ye suffer your tongues to run *Riot* in bitter scoffs. BISHOP HALL *Rem. Wks.* 122.

(2) The sculptor seems to have let his imagination altogether *run riot*.

H MILLER *First Imp. Eng.* III, 38.

(3) The wandering ivy and vine, this way and that, in many a wild festoon *ran riot*. TENNYSON *Oenone* 99.

**run short.** To have an insufficient quantity, to run out of, to become exhausted.

Coron was *running short* of supplies. S LANE-POOLE *Barbary Corsairs* I, vii, 81.

There was a great dearth of arms . . . and the supply in the Tower soon *ran short*. WOLSELEY *Marlborough* II, 99.

**run to seed.** To exhaust vigor in seed-bearing; hence, to lose vigor; as, he is *running rapidly to seed*.

Now Peter *ran to seed* in soul  
Into a walking paradox

SHELLEY *Peter Bell* 3rd VI.

**run up.** 1. To sew or mend hastily; as, to *run up* a torn garment. 2. To incur by gradual accumulations; as, to *run up* a bill. 3. To add or count up rapidly, as a column of figures. 4. To construct hurriedly; put up rapidly; as, to *run up* a building. 5. To shrink up, as wet cloth. 6. To put in a prominent position; hoist; display; as, to *run up* the flag. 7. [W. U. S.] To hang up by the neck; string up; as, to *run up* a horse-thief on a tree.

**runt.** 1. [U. S.] (1) The smallest pig in a litter. (2) A short or undersized man or woman; a dwarfish object. 2. [Eng.] Small cattle from the Scotch or Welsh mountains.

**rush, not worth a.** Valueless: from the practise of strewing fresh rushes on the floor of guests' rooms, prior to the use of carpets. Unwelcome visitors sometimes found the floor bare.

**rush copy in short takes.** [U. S.] To supply matter for printing so as to keep the press at work.

**rusticate.** [Brit. Univ.] To send down; to punish by banishment; hence, **rustication.** The state of being rusticated.

**rustle.** [U. S.] To show energy; hustle; push one's way

*Rustle now, boys, rustle!* for you have a long and hard day's work ahead of you.  
*Harper's Magazine* LXXI, 190.

**rustler.** [U. S.] 1. A hustler, a person of vim and energy.

Pard, he was a *rustler*

MARK TWAIN *Innocents at Home* 20.

2. A cattle thief

Sixty thieves were hanged after a pitched battle between the cattle men and the *rustlers*.  
*The Scotsman* May 7, 1892.

## S

**sachem.** [U. S.] An American Indian chief.—**Grand Sachem.** The principal officer of the Tammany Society of New York.

**sack, to get or give the.** [Brit.] To discharge or be discharged, to dismiss or be dismissed; to fire or be fired

I wonder what old Fogg would say? I should *get the sack*, I suppose

DICKENS *Pickwick Papers* XX.

Thus *giving the sack* arose from the fact that masters or mistresses gave dismissed servants a rough bag in which to pack up their belongings, in order to expedite their departure  
*The Standard* London, April 18, 1895.

**sackcloth and ashes.** Marks of penitence or humiliation; hence, mourning, sorrow, remorse; self-abasement.

He knew that for all that had befallen she was mourning in mental *sackcloth and ashes*  
HUGH CONWAY *Family Affair* xxvi.

**sacrifice.** [Trade Cant.] Regardless of cost.

Its patterns were last year's and going at a *sacrifice*.

DICKENS *Chimes* II.

**sad dog.** [Brit.] A debauchee.

I suppose you think me a *sad dog* . . . I . . . confess that appearances are against me  
SMOLLETT *Roderick Random* xvi.

**safe, to play.** 1. [Sporting.] To try to leave a difficult shot for the next player, at the expense of failing to score. 2. To conduct one's business in such a way as to minimize the chance of loss—to **play for safety.** To so play a game as to reduce the chances of losing it

**safe bind, safe find.** [Brit.] What is packed securely will so remain.

**sail, v.** To soar or move quickly, float or glide through the air without using means of propulsion; as, the hawk *sailed* down without flapping its wings.

**sail** is used with special significance in various phrases—**full sail**. With all sails set, hence, in grand attire, in full dress—**sail of the line**. Warships; ships of the line

With the loss of the service of at least two *sail of the line*

SOUTHEY *Life of Nelson*.

—**to sail in**. 1. To put in an appearance, to proceed boldly, to take part in the matter

Lady B *sailed in* . . . many brooches, bangles, and other gimeracks ornamenting her plenteous person

THACKERAY *Love the Widower*.

"I'll tell you the whole affair, if you care to listen to it" "*Sail right in*, Colonel," cried the company.

FISKE *Holiday Stories* 164

2. To attack promptly and with vigor—**to set sail**. To begin a voyage a phrase derived from the spreading of the sails of a sailing ship preparatory to leaving port; hence, to depart—**to strike sail**. To take in sail, as in saluting, or in case of sudden wind; hence, to give token of submission

Margaret

Must *strike her sail*, and learn awhile to serve

While kings command

SHAKESPEARE III *Henry VI* act iii, sc. 5.

**Saint Luke's summer, or the little summer of Saint Luke**. A short period of mild weather in England that usually sets in about Saint Luke's day, October 18. It corresponds to the Indian summer of the North American continent.

**sake's sake, for old**. For the sake of times gone by; for "auld lang syne" (old long since).

**salad days**. [Brit.] The days of inexperienced youth and simplicity; green and unripe age.

My *salad days* when I was green in judgment

SHAKESPEARE *Antony and Cleopatra* act iv, sc. 5.

**salt**. I. *a.* High priced; costly; dear: in the phrase **rather too salt**. Too highly seasoned; hence, too costly. See quotation.

*It's rather too salt*, said of an exorbitant hotel bill.

HOTTEN *Dict. of Slang*.

II. *n.* 1. Vigor; strength; pungency; flavor: from sodium chloride, used as seasoning. 2. A sailor.—**above the salt**. In a place of honor.

We took him up *above the salt* and made much of him. KINGSLEY *Westward Ho!* xv. The phrase dates from the feudal period when master and men or lord and retainers, dined at the same table, and the salt-cellar marked the middle of the board. Those who sat above the salt were in the places of honor, and those of inferior rank sat below the salt.

Though of Tory sentiments, she by no means approved of these feudal times when the chaplain was placed *below the salt*

J. PAIN *Luck of Darrell's* xxxvii

—**he won't earn salt for his porridge**. He will never earn enough to support himself, that is, to supply salt for his food—**not worth one's salt**. Not worth the food that one eats said of a ne'er-do-well—**the salt of the earth**. The kindest hearts and noblest men and women of a community the plain people whose influence is exerted for the common good preserving it from corruption. derived from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5 13)

The *salt ones of the earth* in their private boxes

*The Daily Telegraph* London, May 27, 1868.

—**to be worth one's salt**. To be worth the smallest part of one's support

Every man who is *worth his salt* has his enemies T. HUGHES *Tom Brown II*, v.

—**to put or lay salt on the tail**. To catch from a playful direction to children on how to catch birds

Were you coming near him with soldiers, or constables .

you will never *lay salt on his tail*.  
SCOTT *Redgauntlet* xi.

—to row up **Salt River**. [U S.] To beat or defeat, as a candidate or a party, get the advantage of

See if I don't row *you up Salt River* before you are many days older

J K PAULING *Banks of the Ohio* I, 133

—to salt a mine or claim. To deposit or sprinkle rich ore or precious stones in, so as to deceive a prospective purchaser, also, to put petroleum into an oil-well for the same purpose

The supposed great oilfields of Florida have been fraudulently salted with refined petroleum

*The Westminster Gazette* London, June 29, 1901

—to salt an invoice, the books, or accounts. [Brit.] To alter the records of a business for fraudulent purposes

Making fictitious entries in the books to simulate that the receipts are greater than they really are, when about to sell a business connection, is called *saltng the books*

BARRÈRE AND LELAND *Slang Dictionary*

—to spill the salt. To invite bad luck, according to a superstition which has descended from Roman times

They threw the salt over their shoulders

in propitiation of evil powers, when

they spilled it at table

*Harper's Magazine* Nov 1884

—to take with a grain of salt. To accept with reserve or doubt

Our reasons for not accepting the author's pictures of early Ireland *without a grain of salt*

*The Athenæum*, London, Aug 1, 1908

—true to one's salt. True to one's salary that is, to one's employer's interests

**Sam.** [U. S. Pol.] One of the Know-nothing party, because of the members' professed love for *Uncle Sam*.

He crawled into the canes, garrets, and cellars where "Sam" congregated, took all the horrid oaths, and learned the secret grips of that order

MR MONTGOMERY of Pennsylvania, Speech in the House of Representatives Jan 18, 1860

**Samaritan.** A humane, compassionate person

A certain Samaritan when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, etc

*Luke X*, 33

The bonny Scot had already accosted the younger Samaritan

SCOTT *Quentin Durward* II

**Sam Hill.** [U. S.] A euphemism for "the devil"; the deuce.

How in *Sam Hill* can she do it?

*The Evening Post* New York, April 12, 1909

**samp.** [U. S.] Coarse meal made of maize or Indian corn. In the Northern States this term includes the whole grain which has been deprived of its outer covering, called in the Southern States *homany*.

**Sam Patch.** A wonder. See below.—**like Sam Patch.** Quickly, recklessly; like a famous jumper of that name who jumped down the falls at Rochester, New York, Nov. 6, 1829.

The American people must at all times have an idol to worship, and a clown to laugh at, they must have occasionally a *Sam Patch*

to marvel at or talk about

MR SEVIER of Arkansas in United States Senate Feb 20, 1839

See *Congressional Globe* p 186

**sample.** 1. A portion, part, or piece. 2. [Brit.] A drink, hence, a **sample-room**, a drinking-place; bar; gin-mill, saloon.

**sanctum sanctorum.** The holy of holies; hence, humorously, a place of privacy, as an editor's private office, a study in one's home.

Here was the *sanctum sanctorum* of female privacy

WASHINGTON IRVING *The Alhambra* 122.

**sand.** Strength of character; endurance; courage; grit; pluck.—**the sand has run out.** The hour is up, the time has expired; the appointed term has ended from the sand in an hour glass.

Now our sands are almost run

SHAKESPEARE *Pericles* act v, sc 2.

**sandman is about, the.** The children are sleepy and rub their eyes, as if to take the sand out of them: used to signify that it is bedtime.



**sandwichman.** A man who perambulates the streets bearing from his shoulders boards displaying advertisements before and behind him.

**Sandy.** [Brit.] A Scot: diminutive for *Alexander*.

**sang-froid.** [F.] Perfect poise amid circumstances of embarrassment or danger; steadiness of nerve; assurance; collectedness; cold-blooded calmness.

Cameron accepted the situation with his usual *sang froid*

ANNA KATHERINE GREEN *Behind Closed Doors* V.

**Santa Claus.** 1. The patron saint of children, in nursery folk-lore, a friend who brings presents on Christmas eve: usually pictured as a fat, jolly old man, dressed in red trimmed with white fur, who descends chimneys to fill the stockings hung by the chimneypiece with gifts

No believe in *Santa Claus*! You might as well not believe in fairies . . . No-body sees *Santa Claus*, but that is no sign that there is no *Santa Claus*. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. No *Santa Claus*! Thank God! he lives, and he lives forever

FRANK CHURCH *Is there a Santa Claus?* in *The Sun* New York, Sept. 21, 1897.

2. The spirit of Christmas

**sap, saphead, sap-pate.** A fool, softie.

You don't seem to know anything, somehow—perfect *sap-head*

MARK TWAIN *Huckleberry Finn* iii.

**Sardinian laugh.** A laugh on the wrong side of one's mouth; a laugh that one will regret.

**Sardonic smile.** A smile of contempt

The *Sardonic* or *Sardinian* laugh caused, it was supposed, by a plant growing in Sardinia, of which they ate died laughing TRENCH *Study of Words* iv, 176

**Satan reproving sin.** The guilty chiding the guilty, the pot calling the kettle black.

**Saturnalia.** A season of general license and revelry, disorder and misrule; as a *saturnalia* of crime: from the festival of Saturn celebrated by the Romans December 17 to 19, during which all business was suspended.

**Saturnian.** Pertaining to the age or reign of Saturn, called by the ancients the golden age; hence, characterized by happiness and simplicity; happy; care free. Compare SATURNINE.

**Saturnian Days.** Days of dulness and venality.

Then rose the seed of Chaos and of Night,  
To blot out order and extinguish light,  
Of dull and vena a new world to mould  
And bring *Saturnian* days of lead and gold.

POPE *The Dunciad* iv.

**Saturnine.** Gloomy, grave, morose, phlegmatic, heavy and dull, as attributed to one born under the influence of the planet Saturn. Compare SATURNIAN.

**sauce<sup>1</sup>.** [U. S.] Vegetables, especially those served with meat; hence, garden sauce, the product of a kitchen garden.

**sauce<sup>2</sup>.** Brazen impudence; cheek, nerve.

I'll *sauce* her with bitter words.

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act iii, sc. 5.

—**sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.** That which is good enough for the one is equally good for the other, like actions demand like treatment —**the sauce is better than the fish.** The accessories are preferable to the main part said frequently of books in which the illustrations are superior to the text —**to serve the**

**same sauce.** To treat in the same manner as one is treated; give as good as one takes, retaliate

After him another came unto her, and served her with the same sauce

*The Man in the Moon* (1609)

**saucers.** [Brit.] Eyes, especially large or widely opened eyes.

Yet when a child (bless me!) I thought

That thou a pair of horns had'st got

With eyes like saucers staring

PETER PINDAR *Ode to the Devil*

**saucily.** In an impudent manner; with assurance.

This knave comes somewhat saucily into the world before he was sent for

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act i, sc 1

**saucy.** Disrespectful to superiors; impudent.

What saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery [roguery].

SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* act ii, sc. 4

**save appearances.** See under APPEARANCES.

**sawbones.** [Brit.] A surgeon.

"What! don't you know what a sawbones is, Sir?" inquired Mr Weller

everybody know'd as a Sawbones was a Surgeon"

DICKENS *Pickwick* XXX

**say or have one's say.** To speak one's mind, to tell all there is to tell or give one's story in one's own way.

He would not interrupt me for fear I should not have time to say all my say

TUCKER *Lt Nat* I, 473

**say-so.** One's personal assertion.

Your own say-so will be enough

JAMES WEIR *Simon Kenton* 93

**scab.** 1. [Labor Cant] A strike-breaker; a blackleg; a non-union laborer.

You're three beastly scabs

KIPLING *Stalky & Co* 71.

2. [Brit.] A rascal, especially a constable or sheriff's officer: sometimes used jocularly.

Wart, thou art a good scab

SHAKESPEARE II *Henry IV* act iii, sc 2

**scads.** [U. S.] Money; resources.

You'll find a buckskin purse, with some scads in it, in the bag

BRET HARTE *Trent's Trust*

**scalawag, scallawag.** [U. S.] 1. A good-for-naught, a prodigal, a scamp

You good for nothing young scallawag.

HALIBURTON *Human Nature*

2. A native Southern white Republican during the reconstruction period (1865-1870). 3. Ill-fed cattle. *Cent. Dict.*

**scalp.** [U. S.] 1. To complete a victory; conquer: from the Indian custom of scalping an enemy, the males wearing a long tuft of hair as an invitation to their enemies. 2. To cut prices, especially on railway and theater tickets; hence, **ticket-scalpers.**

With the eternal quarrels between railways and scalpers, passengers have nothing to do

*The Nation* New York, Oct 5, 1882

—to have or take one's scalp. To achieve a victory over, deprive of or replace in office

The hon member said he would either have our votes or our scalps

MR WINTHROP of Massachusetts, Speech in House of Representatives, Feb 21, 1850

**scamp.** I. n. 1. A rogue; a rascal: used sometimes jocularly; hence, **scampish**, roguish; tricky.

Of all the scampish scamps unhung this specimen of perverted culture beats all.

*The Daily Mail*, London, Jan 14, 1902.

2. [Brit.] A highway robber. II. v. 1. To do poor or bad work.

The idea of scampng her work had no existence in her

JAMES PAYN *Grape from a Thorn* xliii

2. To give short measure or weight; hence, to act dishonestly. 3. To rob on the highway.

**scant-of-grace.** An unruly fellow; a madcap.

You, a gentleman of birth and breeding . . . associate . . . with a sort of *scant-of-grace*, as men call me

SCOTT *Kenilworth* iii

**scapegoat.** One who is blamed for the delinquencies or faults of others from the Biblical allusion to the goat on which the sins of the people were laid symbolically. See *Leviticus* xvi.

**scaramouch.** A poltroon; one given to boasting and valiant words who is a coward at heart.

**Scarborough warning.** An attack without warning.

**scarce, to make oneself.** To take oneself off, go and keep away.

When Lovel's wife began to show me she was tired of my company, I *made myself scarce*

THACKERAY *Lovel* 1.

**scare-head.** 1. [U. S.] A heading in the largest display type in the composing-room. 2. [Brit.] A line in bold type to attract attention.

**scarlet fever.** [Brit.] Feminine preference for soldiers when scarlet was the chief color of military uniforms.

**scarlet woman.** 1. [Biblical] The woman of *Revelations* xvii, 4, 5, considered as a personification of pagan Rome, or of worldliness in general. 2. The city of London. 3. A prostitute.

**scatterbrain.** [Brit.] A giddy, unreasoning person; a flighty or impulsive woman.

**scavenger's daughter.** An instrument of torture that compressed the body of its victim into a ball, invented by Sir William Skevington, lieutenant of the Tower of London. See quotation.

[The committee] found in Little Ease in the Tower an engine of torture called *Skevington's daughters*

Commons Journal May 14, 1604

**scene, to create or make a.** To cause a disturbance by a show of angry feeling; display one's temper or emotions.

You have no desire to expostulate, to upbraid, to *make a scene*

BRONTË *Jane Eyre* XXVII

**scenes, behind the.** In the know; familiar with the intentions or motives of a person: in a position to see the difference between make-believe and reality; to have inside information: originally a phrase of the theater connoting, at the back of the stage.

**schooner.** 1. A large glass or beer; hence, a malt measure of 14 fluid ounces. 2. [U. S.] A prairie-schooner or emigrant wagon of the western plains.

**scissors and paste.** 1. Literary work composed of clippings pasted together; mere compilation lacking originality. 2. The sub-editor of a newspaper who does this work.

**scoop, n.** 1. A shallow bay or hollow excavation. 2. A bonnet with a projecting poke or brim.

Her head was honored with an ancient straw *scoop*

*Knickerbocker Magazine* March, 1856

3. An item of news published in advance of a competitor or an article treating a topic of public interest printed in advance of other newspapers. 4. The winning of large amount of money at cards; also the money so won.

**scoop**, *v.* 1. To publish ahead of (a rival), as news. See **SCOOP**, *n.* 3. 2. To gain an advantage over. 3. To win heavily. See **SCOOP**, *n.* 4.

**scoot**. To hurry off; dart away, move quickly.—**scooter**. A boat-like structure that can be sailed in water or on ice.

The captain *scooted* round into one port an' another

*Atlantic Monthly* March, 1858

**scorcher**. 1. Something hot enough to scorch; hence, something caustic or severe. 2. A person or animal that travels at great speed, as a bicyclist, a horse, etc.

**score, to go off at**. 1. To push forward without interruption; act without self-restraint. 2. In racing to make a quick start from the scratch.

His horse, Blesbok, *went off at score*, and followed the spoor as accurately as any dog

W. C. BALDWIN *African Hunting* III, 64

**scornful dogs will eat dirty puddings**. Necessity knows no law, needs must whom the devil drives, need compels deeds no matter how unpleasant; hungry dogs are not fastidious about their food.

"All nonsense and pride," said the laird "*Scornful dogs will eat dirty puddings*"

SCOTT *Redgauntlet* XI.

**scorpion**. A whip or scourge of knotted cords. See 1 *Kings* XII, 11

**scot and lot**. Municipal tax in Great Britain formerly laid on all of a parish, according to their ability to pay; figuratively, obligations of every kind

The juries are selected by the bailiffs from the inhabitants who pay *scot and lot*

*Municipal Corporation Reports*, Appendix I, 5

**Scotch**. [Brit.] 1. The language of Scotland. The people of Scotland of *Scottish* blood are *Scots*. 2. Whisky made in Scotland and sold elsewhere, also, a drink of such whisky

In the early evening watches he had started well on *Scotches*

MARSHALL *He Slumbered*

—**Scotch breakfast**. A substantial breakfast —**Scotch fiddle**. [Brit.] The itch

—**Scotch marriage**. A marriage following an elopement, especially when the girl was below the age required by law

When I was young, and a most consummate fool, I got myself entrapped into a *Scotch marriage*

M. E. BRADLON *Gloven Foot* XIX

—**Scotch mist**. A heavy mist such as is common in the highlands of western Scotland, hence, humorously, rain —**Scotch pint**. Two English quarts —**Scotch shilling**.

A penny from the fact that in 1600 the Scotch pound was worth twenty pence

**scotch and notch, out of all**. [Brit.] Beyond all calculation or bounds.

We gird them and flout them *out of all scotch and notch*, and they cannot see it

LYLY *Mother Bombe* II, III

**scot-free**. [Brit.] Free from harm or punishment; scatheless; free from payment, as of a tavern score.

Some notorious offender has got off *scot free*.

BLACK *Green Post* XIII.

**Scotland Yard**. Formerly the headquarters of the London Metropolitan Police in **Great Scotland Yard**, a short street off Whitehall. They were removed in 1870 to **New Scotland Yard** on the Thames Embankment, near the back of Montague House, and not far from the original site.

*Scotland Yard*, London—so called from a palace which stood there for the reception of the King of Scotland when he came to England to pay homage to his over-lord the King of England.

BREWER *Reader's Handbook* p. 971

**scran to you, bad.** [Anglo-Irish.] Literally, "bad food or bad victuals to you"; bad luck to you.

*Bad scran to me if I wouldn't marry you out of a face this blessed morning just as soon as I'd look at ye*

LEVER *Charles O'Malley* lxxxv.

**scrap, n.** 1. A fight or scuffle. 2. Something to be discarded. See **SCRAP, v.**  
**scrap, v. I. 1.** To engage in a fight; quarrel. 2. [U. S.] To throw away, consign to the rubbish heap, discard.

**scrape.** [Brit.] A predicament, an awkward situation or a difficulty.

Have they drawn poor Sir Lucian into the *scrape*

SHERIDAN *The Rivals* act v, sc. 1.

**scrape acquaintance.** To insinuate oneself into an acquaintance; to make friends casually.

**scrap of paper.** An agreement, as between two or more sovereign states or sovereigns, duly ratified by the supreme authorities of the parties thereto, and formally signed by their authorized representatives

Without regard to *scraps of paper* called constitutions, I will do my duty as I see it

KING WILLIAM OF PRUSSIA *See Harper's Weekly* March 26, 1887

Treaties are *scraps of paper*

BISMARCK.

Just for a *scrap of paper* Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation

BETHMANN-HOLLWEG, Aug. 4, 1911, quoted in *War Cyclopedia* Government Printing

Office, Washington, 1918

**scratch, n.** 1. Collected promiscuously; taken at random or by chance; as, a *scratch* football-team, vote, etc

Our pack was what is called a *scratch* pack Every one contributed a dog or two

JEPHSON *Brutality* ix, 47

2. Having no allowance at the start; starting even as to time and distance, as in a contest without handicap said of a race or match-game.

**scratch, v.** To cancel the name of a horse from the list of starters.

**scratch, n.** 1. Something slight or insignificant; a trifle.

Our loss is a *scratch*, one lieutenant and thirty-nine men killed

HORACE WALPOLE in *Letter to Mann* Nov. 30, 1759

2. A slight sketch or a hurried letter

Every *scratch* of his pen was accounted a treasure

COOPER in *Letter to Newton*, 1836 See his Works vol V, p 153

3. In pugilism, a line drawn across the ring to indicate the starting point, or a mark across a course for the same purpose, hence, to **come up to the scratch**, to bring to the scratch, to toe the scratch. To bring, come or toe the starting line, be ready to carry out one's promises or to have carried them out.

**scratch a ticket.** [U. S. Pol.] To strike out some names under a party emblem, thus voting a mixed ticket; hence, a **scratcher**, one who votes in this way

To whom a *scratcher* or a bolter is more hateful than the Beast

*Atlantic Monthly* lii, 327.

**scratched.** In horse-racing, a horse withdrawn for any reason from a race for which it was entered.

**scratches, that's where the hen.** That is the chief point of the affair, the pivot of the matter, the gist of the argument, etc.

**screen.** 1. A movement, as of a small body of men, used to cover or direct the attention from some more important move by an army.

2. A smoke screen — **smoke screen.** The spreading of smoke, as by destroyers, to cover the movements of a fleet or the like.

**screw.** 1. [U. S.] A minute and harassing college examination. 2. [Brit.]

Wages, salary.

The *screw* was a pound a week.

CONAN DOYLE *Sherlock Holmes* 58

3. A stingy person, a miser

They both agreed in calling him an old *screw*; which means a very stingy, avaricious person

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* viii

4. A horse that has been worn by overwork or one not perfectly sound, applied sometimes to a sick cow 5. A bracer of bitters, a pick-me-up — a *screw loose*. 1. A defect, something wanting in the constitution of a person or thing

Who will put his finger upon the *loose screw*?

V. STUART *Egypt* 314

2. A person not mentally sound

In fact a genius with a *screw loose*, as we used to say

E FITZGERALD *Letters* I, 21

—to *screw one's courage to the sticking point*. To resolve upon decisive action; to make up one's mind determinedly

But *screw your courage to the sticking place*, and we'll not fail

SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* act i, sc 7.

—to *apply*, *put*, *turn on*, or *put under the screw or screws*. 1. To apply moral pressure, coerce or compel 2. To extort the payment of a debt by force, in allusion to the torture of the thumb-screws

We didn't *put on the screws* half hard enough The Insurgents ought to have been hung

JUDD *Margaret* II, vii

Occasionally the assessors of a country town take it into their heads to *apply the screw*

BRUCE *American Commonwealth* II, lxiii, 133

—to *screw up*. 1. To raise, as rent, interest, etc., to an extortionate figure. 2. To contract the mouth as by drawing in the lips

**screwed.** [Brit.] Slightly intoxicated, partly drunk.

**screwy.** [Brit.] Worthless, worn out. See *SCREW*, *n.* 4.

**scrooge or scrouge.** To crowd, squeeze oneself forward.

Such pushing and *scrooging*, you never saw the like.

HALL CAINE *Manxman* liv, 263

**scrub.** 1. *n.* [Brit.] Anything mean, paltry, or ill conditioned; also, a person wearied or worn out with toil.

No *scrubs* would do for such purpose Nothing less would satisfy our directors than our member in the House of Commons

DICKENS *Martin Chuzzlewit* xxxv

II. *a.* Scratch; indiscriminate

We got together a *scrub* rifle team of four as unkempt, dejected and vicious-looking bronchos as ever stuck fast in a quicksand

ROOSEVELT in *Century Magazine* xxxvi, 200.

**scrumptious.** 1. Fine; bully; splendid; glorious.

Isn't it *scrumptious*? Good old sea!

KIPLING *Stalky & Co* 7

2. Stylish; handsome.

**sea** is used in combination with other terms that are employed figuratively or idiomatically, in the following phrases.—**all at sea** or **at sea**. Completely at a loss to know what to do or say or how to act, bewildered, perplexed

I was rather surprised to find that he seemed *all at sea*, and had no one ready to go with me

SELOUS *Travels S E Africa* 219.

—**at full sea**. At the highest point; hence, at the height from the flood—or highest tide of the sea —**beyond sea** or **beyond the seas**. 1. Out of the country, abroad.

He is a very ingenious man, and a great scholar, and has been *beyond seas*

SWIFT *Journal to Stella* Oct 26, 1710.

2. Deported, also, outside of the jurisdiction of a court.—**brazen sea**. A great bronze laver in Solomon's Temple Called also **molten sea**. 1 *Kings* vii, 23,

2 *Kings* xxv, 13 —**on sea** or **on the sea**. [Brit.] On the sea-coast, as Southend-on-sea —**sea-acorn**. A barnacle —**sea-adder**. A pipe-fish; also, a 15-spined stickle-back —**sea-angel**. An angel-fish —**sea-ape**. 1. The thresher-shark or a monster shark or dogfish 2. The sea-otter —**sea-apple**. The fruit of a tropical American palm often washed ashore in the West Indies Sometimes called

**sea-coconut**. —**sea-arrow**. A flying-squid or an arrow-worm —**sea-asparagus**. A soft-shelled crab —**sea-basket**. A basket-fish —**sea-bat**. 1. One of the angel-fishes with wing-like fins. 2. A batfish: so called from its appearance and color.—

**sea-bear.** 1. A fur-seal. See *New Standard Dict.*, def. 1, and quotation. 2. The polar bear — **sea-beard.** A seaweed — **sea-beaver.** A carnivorous mammal with a body resembling the otter, which has silver-gray brown fur above and liver-brown beneath and is highly prized. It frequents the rocky shores of the northern Pacific and is sometimes called the **sea-otter**. — **sea-beef.** Whale meat or porpoise flesh. Called also **sea-pork**. — **sea-bladder.** A Portuguese man-of-war. — **sea-boat.** A chiton or bug of the sea — **sea-bottle.** A seaweed having many bladder-like cells — **sea-bread.** The remnants of siliceous sponges of American or European waters. Sometimes called **sea-cracker**. — **sea-bull.** The sea-calf — **sea-bumblebee.** The auk, from the strongly contrasted black and white color — **sea-butterfly.** A mollusk that has wing-like lobes or fins — **sea-cabbage.** Same as **SEA-KALE** — **sea-calf.** The harbor-seal so called from its cry — **sea-canary.** The white whale from the whistling noise that it makes — **sea-cat.** Any one of several marine creatures likened to a cat, as the catfish, a fur-seal, a wolf-fish which has strong teeth with which it breaks the shells of shell-fish, a cuttle-fish, etc. — **sea-caterpillar.** One of the scale-back worms of the sea — **sea-cattle.** Fabled creatures of the sea attending the mermaids — **sea-cauliflower.** One of the marine anemones — **sea-cloth.** In theatrical cant, a cloth used to represent the sea or sea-water — **sea-coal.** Coal that has been transported by sea as distinguished from charcoal — **sea-cock.** 1. A viking or rover of the seas. 2. One of several birds, as (1) a puffin; (2) a sea-plover — **sea-coconut.** Same as **SEA-APPLE** — **sea-cook.** A ship's cook usually opprobriously in the phrase **you son of a sea-cook**, you good-for-nothing — **sea-cow.** 1. A manatee or dugong. 2. A walrus. 3. The hippopotamus — **sea-cowbird.** A plover which associates with the hippopotamus and warns it of approaching danger — **sea-cracker.** Same as **SEA-BREAD** — **sea-cross.** One of the jellyfishes — **sea-crow.** One of various birds, as (1) the cormorant; (2) the laughing gull, (3) the razor-billed auk, (4) the skua; (5) the coot, (6) the shearwater — **sea-cuckoo.** A fish, one of the gurnards, that by vibrating muscles connected with its air-bladder produces various sounds — **sea-cucumber.** A cucumber-shaped holothurian — **sea-cuncky.** A pilot or helmsman: a corruption of the Persian *sakkāni* — **sea-date.** A marine stone-boring bivalve with shell shaped like a date — **sea-day.** A day of 24 solar hours reckoned from local mean noon — **sea-devil.** A devil-fish — **sea-dog.** 1. A buccaneer or pirate. 2. An old sailor or a person fond of the sea. 3. A harbor-seal. 4. The California sea-hon. 5. A dogfish. 6. A halo seen in a fog at sea — **sea-dove.** One of two birds: (1) The little auk. (2) The black guillemot — **sea-dragon.** A flying sea-horse of the East-Indian ocean — **sea-drum.** A marine fish that makes a drumming noise — **sea-dust.** Desert sand blown far out at sea and sometimes causing what is termed red fog or red rain — **sea-ear.** An abalone shell — **sea-egg.** A sea-urchin with distended pod that somewhat resembles an egg — **sea-elephant.** An elephant seal — **sea-fan.** A coral with fan-like branches — **seafarer.** A seaman — **seafaring.** The calling of a seaman — **sea-farm.** An oyster farm — **sea-feather.** A feather-like submarine anemone; a sea-pen — **sea-fern.** A fern-like submarine growth — **sea-fig.** A fig with fragrant purple flowers native of California, Chile, and Australia — **sea-fire.** The phosphorescence of sea-water — **sea-flea.** A sand-flea common at the seashore — **sea-floor.** The bottom of the sea — **sea-foam.** 1. Meerschaaum. 2. A liquid mixture used by barbers for washing the hair — **sea-fox.** The thresher-shark. — **sea-frog.** An angler-fish. — **sea-gate.** 1. A rolling swell of the sea. 2. An approach to the sea — **sea-gherkin.** A small sea-cucumber — **sea-gipsy.** One of a class of beach-combers or nomads that frequent the seas of Malaysia — **sea-grass.** 1. One of several subaquatic grass-like plants, a pondweed or a gulfweed. 2. A cloud having wavy lines that resemble sprays of tangled grass — **sea-goose.** 1. A dolphin. 2. A sandpiper-like bird — **sea-haar.** A cold penetrating fog that spreads inland from the sea — **sea-hanger.** A variety of seaweed — **sea-hare.** A slug-like marine creature — **sea-hedgehog.** 1. A spiny globe-fish. 2. A marine urchin — **sea-hen.** 1. A bird, the skua or the guillemot. 2. A fish, the piper-gurnard — **sea-hog.** A porpoise — **sea-hound.** A dogfish — **sea-horse.** 1. A walrus. 2. A small fish that has a head and body resembling the head and neck of a horse, and a finless prehensile tail. 3. A foam-crested wave. 4. A fabulous monster half horse and half fish driven by Neptune in his chariot. 5. A hippopotamus — **sea-ivory.** Ivory obtained from walrus-tusks — **sea-jelly.** A jelly-fish — **sea-kale.** A herb of the mustard family that grows on the seacoasts and is prized for its edible shoots — **sea-kidney.** A kidney-shaped marine invertebrate animal or zooplyte — **sea-king.** A viking — **sea-lace.** A brown seaweed 20 to 40 feet long — **sea-lark.** One of several small

shore-birds—**sea-lavender**. A plant, the marsh-rosemary.—**sea-lawyer**. 1. A seaman who questions and criticizes at every opportunity. 2. A shark—**sea-legs**. Ability to walk on board ship—to have one's sea-legs. To be accustomed to the motion of a ship under way as in walking or being free from nausea.

The two Bostonians reached London in July. Here they tarried only long enough to take their *sea-legs* off and put their land-legs on.

MARTYN Wendell Phillips bk ii, p 127

—**sea-lemon**. A thick-skinned yellow marine slug—**sea-lentil**. The gulfweed—**sea-leopard**. A spotted seal, also, the harbor-seal—**sea-letter**. An official protective document showing the nationality of a ship, the character of its cargo, the names of its owner and commander, the ports of its departure and entrance, and carried by a neutral vessel in time of war. Called also a **sea-brief**—**sea-lettuce**. A green seaweed sometimes used for food—**sea-lily**. A spiny marine creature with jointed stems and radial arms, a crinoid—**sea-line**. The point of the horizon where on shipboard the sea and the sky seem to meet—**sea-lizard**. A sea-slug—**sea-locust**. A lobster—**sea-mall**. A gull, the sea-mew—**sea-mantis**. A mantis-like shrimp—**sea-marigold**. One of the marine anemones—**sea-mark**. A landmark seen from the sea which aids in the navigating of a ship in a harbor or along a coast, hence, a lighthouse or beacon—**sea-melon** or **sea-pumpkin**. A marine holothurian related to the sea-cucumber—**sea-mink**. The kingfish—**sea-monk**. The hooded or monk-seal—**sea-moth**. A fish with horizontal fins—**sea-mouse**. 1. A marine worm covered with fine iridescent bristles. 2. A bird, the common sandpiper—**sea-mule**. A gull, the seamew—**sea-needle**. The garfish—**sea-nest**. A sponge with fibers resembling spunglass—**sea-nettle**. A stinging jelly-fish—**sea-nymph**. 1. A bird, the antarctic petrel. 2. A fabulous creature, one of the lesser goddesses of the sea—**sea-oak**. One of several seaweeds—**sea-orange**. An orange-colored holothurian with red tentacles—**sea-owl**. The lumpfish—**sea-ox**. The walrus—**sea-panther**. A fish common to the waters of the Cape of Good Hope—**sea-parrot**. 1. A puffin so called from its bill. 2. A prickly-spined fish—**sea-partridge**. A fish, the gilthead—**sea-peach**. A marine creature having a leathery sac and resembling a ripe peach—**sea-peacock**. The Balearic crane—**sea-pear**. A pear-shaped marine creature having a leathery sac—**sea-pen**. A submarine anemone with rod-like base and feathery upper parts—**sea-pheasant**. 1. The pintail duck. 2. The halibut. 3. The turbot—**sea-pie**. A dish consisting of crust and meat baked in alternate layers served to seamen—**sea-pig**. 1. A dugong. 2. A porpoise—**sea-pincushion**. A five-pointed starfish—**sea-plume**. A sea-feather—**sea-pork**. Same as SEA-BEEF—**sea-potato**. A marine creature having a leathery sack resembling the potato—**sea-pudding**. A sea-cucumber—**sea-pumpkin**. A sea-melon—**sea-purse**. 1. An eddying undertow indicated by a whirling of the water on the surface. Called also a **sea-puss**. 2. A small brownish horny capsule resembling a purse and enclosing the eggs of rays or of some sharks—**sea-rat**. A pirate—**sea-raven**. 1. The cormorant. 2. A fish, the sculpin—**sea-robin**. A fish, one of several gurnards—**sea-rover**. 1. A viking. 2. A herring, fresh or salted—**sea-ruff**. A fish, the porgy, sheepshead, gilthead, etc—**sea-scorpion**. A fish, the big sculpin—**sea-serpent**. 1. A monstrous creature of snake-like form believed to inhabit the ocean singly. It has never been captured.

Some of the recorded credible observations of so called *sea-serpents* apparently relate to well-known animals, as ribbon-fishes, basking sharks, etc. A few zoologists believe that the animals seen are plesiosaurs or other large marine reptiles generally supposed to be extinct.

FUNK & WAGNALLS New Standard Dict

2. A sea-snake. 3. A large West-Indian eel. 4. A pirate vessel—**sea-silkworm**. A bivalve mollusk which secretes a silky byssus—**sea-slug**. 1. A marine gastropod with the shell absent or rudimentary. 2. A holothurian—**sea-snake**. 1. A venomous fish-eating snake, of tropical seas, especially of the Indian ocean, having a compressed tail. 2. A sea-serpent—**sea-spider**. A spider-crab—**sea-squirt**. A tunicate—**sea-star**. A starfish—**sea-steps**. A permanent metal ladder attached to the side of a vessel—**sea-stick**. A herring roughly cured at sea, as soon as caught—**sea-strawberry**. An alcyonarian polyp—**sea-sunflower**. A sea-anemone—**sea-surgeon**. A surgeon-fish—**sea-swallow**. A holothurian or trepang—**sea-toad**. A fish: (1) A surgen. (2) The angler. (3) A spider-crab. (4) The toadfish—**sea-trumpet**. 1. A trumpet-shell or triton. 2. A seaweed, the hollow upper end of which is used by herdsmen in South Africa to make a horn—**sea-turtle**. 1. A marine chelonian or sea-tortoise. 2. A bird, the black gullmot or sea-pigeon.—**sea-umbrella**. A



pennatulacean polyp —**sea-unicorn**. The narwhal —**sea-urchin**. An echinoderm with a variously shaped shell bearing numerous movable spines —**sea-vampire**. The devil-fish —**seaware**. Seaweed thrown up by the tides on a beach and used for manure and economically —**sea-washballs**. [Eng.] The egg-cases of the whelk so named from their use by sailors instead of soap —**sea-wasp**. A scyphomedusan.

The stinging power of which is so great that the name 'sea wasp' is commonly given to these medusae. MAYER *Medusa of the World* 504

—**sea-whip**. A whip-shaped coral —**sea-whistle**. A seaweed from the bladders or vesicles of which whistles are made by children —**sea-wife**. A fish, one of various wrasses —**sea-wolf**. 1. A viking or sea-rover 2. A sea-lion 3. The European bass —**sea-wrack**. Seaweeds of various kinds, especially large coarse forms, cast up by the sea —**sea-wreath**. A scutularian hydroid —**short sea**. A sea characterized by short, choppy waves —**sugar-loaf sea**. A sea heaving in pyramidal waves usually with but little wind —**the four seas**. The seas bounding the island of Great Britain on the north, east, south, and west, specif., the Atlantic Ocean, North Sea, English Channel, and Irish Sea, hence, the ocean generally — **The seven seas**. The North Atlantic, the South Atlantic, the North Pacific, the South Pacific, the Indian Ocean, the Arctic Ocean and the Antarctic Ocean — **to follow the sea**. To pursue the calling of a sailor — **to go to sea**. To become a sailor — **to take the sea**. 1. To put out to sea, as an admiral with his fleet 2. To glide into the water, as a ship from the stocks

**sealed book**. A book of which the contents are unknown or unknowable. Specifically, [S-B] a copy of the Book of Common Prayer issued under the great seal of England in the reign of Charles II (1662) and, to preserve the purity of the text, kept in cathedrals and collegiate churches.

**sealed wives**. [U. S.] Plural wives when polygamy was practised by the Mormons

All wives taken after the first are called spiritual wives, and are said to be *sealed* to the husband STANBURY *Salt Lake Exp* 136

**sear and yellow**. Signs of old age and decay, in allusion to the foliage of autumn.

My way of life  
Is fallen into the *sear*, the *yellow leaf*

SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* act v, sc 3

**seasick**. Suffering from illness or nausea caused by the pitching or rolling of a vessel.

**season, hunting**. The period of time during which it is lawful to catch or kill a specified kind of wild game — **close season**. The period when it is unlawful to catch or kill game — **in season**. 1. In condition and obtainable for use, in use, as, clams are *in season* during the summer 2. In good or sufficient time, opportunely 3. In good condition as to flesh or pelt and of beasts, birds, etc 4. Open to be killed or taken by permission of the law — **in season and out of season**. All the time, continually — **out of season**. 1. Out of or beyond the proper, usual, or appointed time, unseasonable 2. Not fit or obtainable for use, not admitting of being legally taken, as, fruits or game *out of season* — **running-season**. Breeding-time — **season ticket**. A commuting ticket — **the Four Seasons**. [Eccl.] The ember-days

**seat**. 1. That on which one sits or the manner of sitting, as on horseback.

2. The base of anything or the place where anything is situated or settled, hence, any pretentious residence, an estate or mansion — **to hold or keep one's seat**. To remain seated, also, to keep one's position as a member of Parliament — **to take a back seat**. See under BACK — **to take one's seat**. To take the sitting-place assigned to one, also, to assume an official position, as in Congress

**secesh**. [U. S.] I. *a.* Secessionist II. *n.* A secessionist; also, the secessionists collectively — **Secessia**. [U. S.] The Confederate States —

**secession**. The act of voluntary withdrawal from political or religious fellowship or association. (1) [U. S. Hist.] The attempted withdrawal of Southern States from

the Union in 1860-1861, also, the doctrine that such withdrawal was constitutional (2) [Scot Eccl Hist] The withdrawal in 1733 from the Scottish established church of a portion of its ministers and laity (3) [Rom Hist] The withdrawal of the Roman plebeians from the city to the Mons Sacer, whenever they would force reforms on the patricians — **War of Secession**. [U S Hist] The Civil War of 1861-1865 between the eleven seceding States and the United States government, resulting in the surrender of the seceding States and the abolition of negro slavery — **secessionist**. One who believes in or favors secession, in the United States, one who maintains the right of a State to withdraw from the Union applied specifically to those who aided or favored the Southern States in 1860-1865

**second best**. Second in character or quality; inferior.—**to come off second best**. To be defeated in a contest.

I am glad to hear of fighting, even though we *come off second-best*

ABIGAIL ADAMS *Familiar Letters* 319 (1777).

**second breath** or **wind**. A return to normal breathing attained after temporary loss of breath caused by physical exertion as in the course of a race.

That mysterious physical readjustment, known in animals as *second breath*, came to the rescue of his fainting frame

*The Barton Experiment.*

**second-hand**. I. a. 1. Not new; having been used by another. 2. Received from another as news, not coming from the original source. II. n. Something that has been used or owned before, as clothing.

**section**. [U S] Neighborhood; vicinity; quarter, region; a distinct part of a city, town, country or people.

**see** is used idiomatically in a few phrases, as the following.—**let me or us see**. Pause a minute while I (or we) consider the matter: used usually as an indication of hesitation or indecision — **to come and or to see**. To call upon, visit — **to go to see**. To visit — **to see about**.—To attend to, investigate; look into — **to see daylight**. [U S] To begin to understand, as a complex situation or complicated subject — **to see double**. To see two images of the same object.

From all intemperance keep,

Nor drink till you *see double*, lisp or sleep

CONGREVE *Art of Love*.

—**to see fit, good, well and proper**. To determine expedient, be willing, consent to — **to see home**. To escort to one's home — **to see life or the world**. To go out and about, indulge in social gaieties or heinous pleasures — **to see little or much of**. To be seldom or frequently in the society of — **to see off**. To be present at a departure, to accompany to a dock, depot, station, etc

Escorted by a multitude of relatives and friends, who all went down, as the common phrase expresses it, *to see them off*

WASHINGTON IRVING *Knickerbocker* II, iv, 119.

—**to see one farther or further**. To see one at a great distance or in some other place used in refusing a request or denying something asked for — **to see one in Halifax or York first**. To refuse a request, decline to do a favor or service for — **to see one through**. To aid one to the end, help one to get out of a difficulty — **to see one's way to**. To have decided to do (something) — **to see out**. 1. To endure to the end, hear to the last word 2. To outstrip or outdo 3. To outlive — **to see stars**. To see bright spots or flashes as the result of a blow on the head or in the face — **to see the color of one's money**. To have before one the evidence of another's willingness to pay, usually with a negative — **to see through**. To understand, as a plan, fathom or discover the purpose or meaning of — **to see to**. To attend to, take care of, look after, as, *to see to one's work*, *to see to a patient*

*See to it* that your train is of vassals whom you serve and feed, not merely of slaves who serve and feed you

RUSKIN *Sesame and Lilies* II

—**to see to the door**. To speed the parting guest.

**seedy**. Run to seed; shabby, shady, run down, out-at-elbows; generic for depreciation; also, in poor health.

You look cursed *seedy*, to be sure

LYTTON *Paul Clifford* vi.

**seek, to.** Deficient in; wanting, lacking; unprepared; uninformed.

Our good clergy are sadly to *seek* in the great points, viz., Church authority, etc.  
ROSS in *Newman's Letters* II, 107

**seen one's best days, to have.** To have passed the prime of one's life; be on the decline.

**selectman.** [U. S.] An executive officer of a New England town or township, chosen annually at a town meeting.

The *selectmen* of a New England town are not paid

BRYCE *American Commonwealth* III, lxiv, 468

**sell.** A hoax, planned deception, swindle; used as a verb in these senses.

It's an awful *sell*, . . . no hunting, and no shooting and no nothing

MRS H. WOOD *Johnny Ludlow* I S xxvi, 465

—**sell-out.** A game of cards, auction bridge — **to sell a bargain.**

To hoax a person by inviting innocent questions to which absurd or impertinent answers are given — **to sell by bulk.** To sell goods without weight or measure —

**to sell forward.** [Eng.] To sell for delivery in the future — **to sell long stock.** In stock-selling operations, to sell stocks of which the operator is long or which he is bullish. See **BULL** — **to sell off.** To dispose of by sale said usually of one's entire stock, possessions, etc.

George heard of a farmer who was *selling off* his sheep about fifty miles off near the coast

CHARLES READE *Never Too Late to Mend* xxxiii

—**to sell one out, to sell one up.** To sell a person's goods under an execution or legal process — **to sell out.** 1. To sell or attempt to sell the whole of, close out, as, to *sell out* one's stock or one's business. 2. Intransitively, to dispose by sale of one's business or interest. 3. To procure secretly or permit the defeat of (a candidate or cause one has professed to favor) in return for some concession or consideration given by the opposing side. 4. To sell one's commission and retire from service formerly done in the British army.

When this transfer of the solid vote of a body of agitators is the result of a bargain with the old party which gets the vote, it is called "*selling out*"

BRYCE *American Commonwealth* III, iv, lxxxiii

—**to sell short.** 1. In stock-selling operations, to sell securities expecting to repurchase them at a lower price. The seller is "short," as he lacks what he has sold. In Great Britain, to speculate for a decline. 2. To sell produce or commodities on the Produce Exchange, as wheat, cotton, pork, etc., on contract for future delivery in the expectation of purchasing the goods at a lower price in time to make the delivery contracted for — **to sell up.** To dispose of the goods or property of an insolvent or bankrupt debtor for the benefit of the creditors.

I was obliged to *sell him up*. for he owed me fifteen months' rent

MISS BRADDON *Lady Audley's Secret* xxviii

**send up.** 1. [U. S.] To send to prison.

They'd blow on me for some of my work, and I'd be *sent up*

JUDSON *Mystery of New York* iii, 7

2. [Brit.] To send (a boy) to the headmaster, either for reward or punishment.

I remember poor Shelley at school being *sent up* for good for a copy of verses

THACKERAY *Pendennis* xxxiv

**sense.** 1. To understand, feel, appreciate.

I cannot *sense* your meaning sometimes

HARDY *Tess* xlviii

He . . . got at the plans of the leaders, the temper of the crowd *sensed* the whole situation

MERRIAM S. *Bowles* I, 101

2. To trace by smell; scent; hence, to uncover, disclose, as something that one wishes were suppressed.

**serape.** [U. S.] A narrow party-colored blanket worn or thrown over a saddle, as by Mexican horsemen.

**serve one out.** To pay one back in like treatment; take vengeance; retaliate; punish: a phrase of the prize-ring now in wide use.

He set his mind to work to consider how he could best *serve me out*

MRS RIDDELL *Mad Tour* 9

**serve one right.** To treat one according to his deserts: referring to some kind of retaliation or punishment.

Everyone had heard of his disgrace, and almost everyone cried, "*Served him right!*"

ANDREW LANG *Prince Priz* vi, 45

**serve one's turn or a turn.** To suffice for one's purpose or need.

**set** is used variously in a number of idiomatic phrases, as the following.—  
**a fine or great set-out.** 1. A display or turn-out, as of society; a great show. 2. An ado or state of things —**to set against.** 1. To prejudice against

Public opinion, now *setting against* this beastly vice

THEODORE PARKER *Experience as a Minister*, Works 318

2. To balance or compensate

Such a fright as we have had will *set against* a great deal of the good

MARTINEAU *Homes Abroad* vii, 104.

3. To attack

The nations *set against* him on every side

Ezekiel xix, 8

—**to set a price on the head of.** To offer a reward for the capture of (a person), dead or alive —**to set aside.** 1. To disregard for the time being 2. To abrogate, as a verdict —**to set at defiance.** To challenge or show opposition to —**to set at ease.** To tranquilize, calm —**to set at naught.** To consider of slight value, also, to despise —**to set a trap.** 1. To lay plans to inveigle a person 2. To prepare a snare to catch game —**to set at work.** To put to work, bring to action —**to set down.** 1. To settle a judgment in one's mind

Therefore *set it down*, That an habit of Secrecy, is both Politic and Moral

BACON *Essays Simul and Dissimul*

2. To record, as a fact or a debt or credit

I have always regretted that Hazlitt *set down* that passage

COWDEN CLARKE *Shakespeare's Characters* 393

3. To rebuke or humiliate, to put down

Sir Harry owned himself to blame, and thus the Lady's pride was *set down* softly

RICHARDSON *Grandison* III, xviii, 251

4. To give a traveler the opportunity to alight 5. To promulgate, as, the King sets down the law —**to set eyes on.** To concentrate the vision on, behold —**to set fire to.** To inflame, cause to burn —**to set forth.** 1. To expound or present to the mind for consideration 2. To publish, make known —**to set in.** 1. To move strongly and steadily toward an end or object 2. To begin in such a way as to indicate continuance, as rain 3. To make an onset, attack vigorously —**to set in order.** To reduce to method, adjust, arrange —**to set little by.** To hold in slight esteem, account or rate as of slight importance —**to set off.** 1. To make a start, begin 2. To adorn or beautify, embellish 3. To mark off, separate, indicate, bound 4. To allow or admit a counterclaim 5. In printing, to deface or spoil (a sheet, as of a book) with the impression of (another sheet), by placing over before giving time to dry 6. In book-keeping, to oppose debits to credits before striking a balance

(1) Messengers *set off* to solicit succour from Badajoz

SOUTHEY *History of the Peninsular War*

(2) The sculpture is improved and *set off* by the color RUSKIN *Seven Lamps* iv

(3) All the windows being *set off* on the outer face of the wall

INKERSLY *Inq Styles Architect France* 311

—**to set one's cap at.** To so adorn or comport oneself as to endeavor to attract the affections of another thereby —**to set one his supper.** To set a pace or perform a feat that can not be surpassed —**to set one's countenance or face against.** To oppose resolutely, object to —**to set one's face like a flint.** To be resolute, hard or determined.

They were a couple of lion-like men; they had *set their faces like a flint*

BUNYAN *Pilgrim's Progress*.

—**to set one's lips, mouth or teeth.** To show signs of determination, as by compressing the lips or mouth or closing the teeth

The old woman *set her lips* firmly and drew her dagger KINGSLEY *Hypatia* xxiv

"I think not," replied Mr Sawyer, *setting his teeth* for a catastrophe

WHYTE-MELVILLE *Market Harbour* xxii

Each *set his mouth* and kept his eyes in front of him STEVENSON *Kidnapped*

—**to set one's teeth on edge.** [Biblical] To irritate, to grate on one's feelings  
See under *EDGE*

The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's *teeth* are *set on edge*

Jeremiah xxxi, 29

—**to set on foot.** To originate; also, to start —**to set out.** To begin a journey, commence a course —**to set right.** To put in order, also, to correct — **to set store by.** To prize or value highly, to regard with deep affection or friendship a phrase with many variants and numerous intensives, such as *great, much, high*, etc., used also in the negative form, as **to set little**, or **no store by or of.**

The precious metal, on which they *set so high a store*

MRS A M BENNETT *Beggar Girl* III, 241.

*Upon* the Icelandic sagas many have *put great store*

LATHAM *Channel Islands* III, xiv.

She *sets more store by* her own vow than by the promise of the Messiah

J B MAYOR *The Expositor* July 19, 1908

—**to set to.** To engage in a boxing-bout, with or without gloves, hence, to begin vigorously, as a task

As prime a *set-to*

And regular turn-up as you ever knew

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends* I, 317.

—**to set up.** 1. To provide the means to enable one to start in business 2. To erect, imitate, institute or establish 3. To place in power or authority 4. To profess to be or make pretensions to 5. To put into type 6. To give oneself airs of superiority or importance

(2) Palisades were *set up*, and a pleasant garden laid out

MACAULAY *History of England* III, 359

(3) She'll be keen for a' that can *set up* King James, and *ding down* King George

SCOTT *Rob Roy* XXVI

(6) She's that *set up* you wouldn't know her

KIPLING *Many Inventions*

—**to set up for.** To pretend to be, make pretensions of being, as, he *sets up for* a humorist —**well set up.** Of proper proportions physically said of a person well-developed

**settle an old score.** To obtain long delayed vengeance, to end a long-standing disagreement or quarrel; to clear accounts.

**settle down.** To fall into regular habits, cease to roam and rove; to establish oneself in a permanent abode.

Riley had left his father's house . . . for America, where he intended to *settle down* Law Times XCII, 127.

**settle one's hash.** To dispose of effectively; get rid of by violence.

**seven days' wonder.** Something which excites public interest for a week or so, and then is forgotten.

The *seven days' wonder* about the boy had almost died away

HUGH CONWAY *Family Affair* vii.

**seven deadly sins.** Pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth.

Sure, it is no sin,

Or of the *deadly sins* it is the least SHAKESPEARE *Measure for Measure* act iii, sc. 1.

**seven league boots.** Foot-gear which enabled Hop o' My Thumb to cover seven leagues at each step. Hence, an aid to great speed or achievement.

Heaven grant he may not have put on his *seven league boots* in vain!

LEIGH HUNT in *London Examiner* April 26, 262/2.

**seven seas.** The North and South Atlantic, the North and South Pacific, the Indian, the Arctic, and the Antarctic oceans.

**seven sleepers.** In medieval legend, seven Christian youths of Ephesus during the persecution under Decius (A. D. 249-251), hid themselves in a cave, and there fell into a miraculous sleep that lasted 196 years.

**seventh heaven.** A state of intense delight or exaltation: from the seven heavens taught by Islam and later Judaism

He looked upon himself as approaching to the *seventh heaven*

SCOTT *St. Ronan's Well* XXVI.

**seven-up.** [U. S.] A game of cards, known also as *all-fours*

Songs and shouts and terrible stoups of liquor were employed to relieve "seven-up" and other games

W. G. SIMMS *Eutaw* 407.

**seven virtues.** Faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

**sew up.** To close or unite, as by sewing

I *sewed up* my mouth, and though he addressed me two or three times, I answered nothing but yes or no

HORACE WALPOLE *To Countess Upper Ossory* June 20, 1785

—**to be sewed up.** 1. To become intoxicated

We must ply him with liquor, for I don't think a little will *sew him up*

J. T. J. HEWLETT *P. Priggins* XX.

2. To be puzzled, embarrassed or nonplused

**shadbelly.** [U. S.] A coat cut in Quaker style; hence, the man who wears it.

His coat is straight-breasted,—*shadbellyed*, as the profane call it

EDWARD EGGLESTON *The Circuit Rider* 146.

**shade, in or into the.** In retirement, sheltered from the world, hence, **to fall into the shade**, to cease to be in the public gaze, to cease to attract attention.

**shadow.** I. *n.* An inseparable companion, or one who, being in constant attendance, is like a shadow. II. *v.* [U. S. Police Cant.] To watch closely, follow and spy upon.

A man calling himself Dr. Adams has been *shadowed* by Boston detectives

*The Boston Globe* Feb. 6, 1888.

—**the shadow of death.** The approach of a direful calamity, as death.

**shadow never grow less, may your.** May you prosper!

The recipients . . . hope that Sara's *shadow* may never grow less

*The Referee* London, Jan. 2, 1887.

**shady.** Of doubtful quality or character; inferior; bad, mentally, morally or physically.

No more seedy clients, no more *shady* cases, Simon Cuffing shall be known for his intense respectability

HATTON *Clyde* III, xiii

**shady side of, on the.** To be more than: said of age; as, she is *on the shady side of* forty, that is, more than forty-five.

**shake.** To shake hands.

Let each man render me his bloody hand

First Marcus Brutus will I *shake* with you

SHAKESPEARE *Julius Cæsar* act iii, sc. 1

—**a fair shake.** [U. S.] A square deal, a just accounting or transaction

Now you know, father, that wasn't a *fair shake*. D. P. THOMPSON, *Locke* Amsden 59

—**in the shake of a lamb's tail.** In a moment, instantly, quickly —**shake a stick at** [U. S.] To warn or threaten, as with a stick

As for every sort of knave and villain, there's more than you could *shake a stick at* in a whole day

CORNELIUS MATTHEWS *Money-penny* 32.

—**shake or shiver in one's shoes.** To tremble from fear, to be in a state of terror.

—**shake one's head.** To show dissent by turning one's head quickly from side to side, give a sign of refusal, denial, etc., by so doing  
Let's *shake our heads*, and say We have seen better days

—**shake the dust off or from one's feet.** To depart from a place or house with ill feeling or unfriendliness, to renounce  
SHAKESPEARE *Timon of Athens* act iv, sc 2

Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, *shake off the dust of your feet* Matthew x, 14

**shake-down.** 1. [U. S.] An enforced levy of contributions; extortion; blackmail. 2. A temporary substitute for a bed made up on the floor.

I would not choose to put more on the floor than two beds and one *shake-down*  
MISS EDGEWORTH *Rose, Thistle and Shamrock* l 3

3. [Western U. S.] A rough dance like the southern negroes' hoe-down.

**shakes.** 1. Long untrimmed logs used as shingles.

A roof of *shakes* held in place by weight-poles, the logs unhewn and substantial in size  
The Evening Post New York, March 28, 1910

2. [S.] A region of the country in the vicinity of New Madrid, on the Mississippi, subject to seismic disturbances that caused large fissures.

Next morning we fixed up, got our pack horses, and off we started for the *shakes*  
Sketches of David Crockett p 108

3. [Slang] Delirium tremens

All had experienced the *shakes*, and so were able to sympathize

—**in a brace of or a couple of shakes.** In a moment, with dispatch, promptly, as quickly as a dog can kill a rat  
NISBET *Sheep's Clothing* IV

Now Dragon could kill a wolf in a brace of *shakes*

—**no great shakes.** [U S] Not of great importance or consequence; of little use; not much good  
READ *Cloister and the Hearth* xciii

A petticoat is *no great shakes* after all, when it hangs fluttering on a clothes line  
Dow *Potent Sermons* iii, 133

**shaky.** Unsteady, not stable, insolvent; dishonest, loose, hence immoral  
Our director was—what is not to be found in Johnson's Dictionary—rather *shaky*  
THACKERAY *Great Hoggarty Diamond*

**shanks's mare.** One's own legs —to ride on shanks's mare. To walk

**shanty.** I. *n.* 1. A small wooden hut 2. [Brit. & Australian.] A drinking-place, especially of the unlicensed kind. 3. [Brit.] Gay, lively,

showy. II. *v.* 1. [Australia] To frequent a drinking-place or rum-shop. 2. [Northwest. U. S.] To live in a shanty, as lumbermen do.

**shanty-boat.** [U. S.] A flat-boat on which a shanty has been built; also, a small houseboat.

**sharp practise.** Hard bargaining, grasping conduct, dishonorable trickery; in earlier usage, work requiring briskness, speed.

Their fondness for trickery and *sharp practice* TOZER *Highlands of Turkey* II, 306.

**shebang.** [U. S.] A shebeen.

**shebeen.** [Ir. or Scot.] A smuggler's hut; an unlicensed drinking-place or an ale-house or wayside tavern; also, a place of shady resort.

A little country ale house, or in Irish parlance, a *shebeen*, which stood at the meeting of four bleak roads  
LEVER *Charles O'Malley* VII.

**sheep, lost.** A sheep that has strayed from the fold; hence, a person who is beyond redemption.

We have erred, and strayed from Thy ways like *lost sheep*

Book of Common Prayer, General Confession

**sheep, to return to our.** Same as TO RETURN TO OUR MUTTON. See under RETURN.

**sheepskin.** [U. S.] Parchment, or a document written on parchment; hence, a diploma. British universities, when requested, issue a certificate to the recipient of a degree on payment of a fee.

He not only lost the valedictory, but barely escaped with his *sheepskin*  
Yale Literary Magazine X, 74

**sheet in the wind.** A state of intoxication.—**to be three sheets in the wind** or **a sheet in the wind's eye.** To be very drunk.

He seldom went up to town without coming down "*three sheets in the wind*"  
R. H. DANA *Two Years Before the Mast* XX

Maybe you think we were all *a sheet in the wind's eye* STEVENSON *Treasure Island*

**shekels.** Money.

Plenty of *shekels* to hire legal talent and pack juries GUNTER *Miss Dividends* X

**shelf, laid or put on the.** Laid aside; no longer in use; discarded; no longer in active service.

Because your career has been checked, and because you have been *put on the shelf*  
BEATRICE HARRADEN *Ships That Pass in the Night* I, vii

**shellback.** [Naut.] A veteran sailor, a barnacle; an old shell.

It takes a sailor a long time to straighten his spine and get quit of the bald sheer that earns him the name of *shell-back* W. CLARK RUSSELL *Jack's Courtship* 1

**shell game.** [U. S.] A swindling game in which the public is invited to bet under which of three shells a pea or bean is hidden. The operator, a palmer, is sure to win, but is always able to find victims at fairs and other public gatherings. In Britain, where thimbles are substituted for shells, the game is called *thimble-rig*.

**shell out.** To hand over or pay money.

**shenanigan, shennannigin.** [Ir.] Humbug; nonsense; chaff, foolery, trickery; bounce.

If I were to pay them they might think there was some *shenanigan* about it  
R. BARR *The Victor* 81

**shepherd.** [Australian] A miner who holds a claim, but does not work it.

**shield, the other side of the.** The opposite side of any debatable matter: in allusion to the two Knights, of whom one said a shield was silver and the other said it was gold. They fought until a third knight showed them both were right, the shield being gold on one side, and silver on the other.

**shift, make a.** To make an effort, bestir oneself, try one's best.

I'd *make a shift*, and fend indoors and out, to give you more liberty  
GEORGE ELIOT *Adam Bede* II.

**shifty.** [U. S.] Not trustworthy; tricky.

Ran away, a Negro man, named Pompey, very artful and *shifty*  
Maryland Journal Feb 18, 1783

**shilling, the King's or Queen's.** [Brit.] The coin formerly given a recruit on enlisting, to bind the bargain

The *Queen's shilling*, once being taken . there was no help for the recruit unless he was bought out ASHTON *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne* II, 203.

**shilly-shally.** [Brit.] Undetermined, dallying, trifling; irresolute.

The shill I, shall I, of Congreve becomes *shilly shally* BURNES *Cecilia* V, 119.

**shimmy.** [U. S.] A dance accompanied by a shaking, shivery wriggle, as of the arms or shoulders

The masters of dancing at the Hotel Astor, in national convention assembled, have *shaken off the mouldy shimmy*  
The World, New York, Aug 2, 1921



**shindy.** A row, disturbance, quarrel, hence, a spree; originally, a dance.  
He went to stop the *shindy*, The Devil wid a pitchfork bedvillin' their tales.

KIPLING *Barrack-Room Ballads*, *The Legend of Evil*.

**shine, to cut a.** To make a display, to cut capers, play tricks.

Has your skipper begun to *cut any shines* yet? N DANA *A Mariner's Sketches* 34.

**shiner.** 1. [Brit.] A coin, especially one of gold, as a pound.

"Fagin," said Sykes, . . . "is it worth fifty *shiners* extra, if it's safely done from the outside?"

DICKENS *Oliver Twist* xix

2. A black eye.

**shinny on your own side.** Keep on your own side to strike the ball: a warning in the game of hockey or shinny to keep within the limits; hence, mind your own business.

**shinny up.** Climb up by the aid of the shins.

**shinplaster.** [U. S.] 1. Originally, any paper money applied first to the depreciated Continental currency after the War of the Revolution.

The government of St. Domingo issued paper money for many years, which had so little purchasing power that *cinque piastres* (five dollars) was of a ridiculously small value reduced to a metallic standard, probably from ten to twenty-five cents. It is possible that *shinplaster* is a corruption of *cinque piastres*.

WILLIAM S. WALSH *Literary Curiosities* p. 1004

2. A small note for a fractional part of a dollar, issued by private bankers during the financial stress beginning with 1837. 3. The fractional or postal currency issued by the government during the Civil War. 4. A curative plaster made of brown paper smeared with tar, vinegar, or the like, for application to a sore shin.

(3) The idea of keeping up our credit by the issue of *shinplasters* is all gammon.

MR. CUTLER of Ohio, Speech in House of Representatives July 26, 1861

**shin round.** [U. S.] To bestir oneself; to move quickly.

The Senator was *shinning round* to get gold.

*The Commercial Advertiser* New York, Dec. 13, 1845

**shin up.** [U. S.] To climb, as up a tree, by means of the shins.

**ship comes home, when one's.** When one's day of prosperity comes; when one's fortune is made.

One [customer] always says he'll give me a ton of tatoes *when his ship comes home*. MAYHEW *London Labor and London Poor* I, 175.

**ship of the desert.** A camel.

**ship of the line.** A ship-of-war of sufficient size and armament to take a place in a line of battle.

**shipshape.** In a trim manner, as a ship with sails trim and neat.

Look to the babes, and till I come again,

Keep everything *shipshape*, for I must go TENNYSON *Enoch Arden* 220

**ship's husband.** [Maritime Law.] The agent who has charge of a ship in port, and sees to entering and clearing, provisions and repairs; a marine superintendent.

A *ship's husband* has the authority of the ship's owners to procure a charter-party, and to make contracts for their benefit.

SIR F. KELLY *Law Reports* 4, Exchequer Div. 22

**shirk.** I. *n.* One who shirks his duty; a slacker. II. *v.* To dodge work; avoid responsibility or duty of any kind.

**shirt on, keep your.** [U. S.] Keep cool; don't get excited. The British idiom is *don't get shirty*. Both are vulgarisms.

**shirt, to get or lose one's.** [Brit.] To make angry; rouse to anger; hence, **shirty**, angry; ill-tempered.

You ain't *shirty* 'cause I kissed yer?

MAUGHAM *Liza of Lambeth* iii.

**shoot, shote.** A pig, not more than a year old; hence, a worthless person.

You elect for Congressmen poor *shoots* that want to go  
Cos they can't seem to git their grub no other ways than so.

LOWELL *Biglow Papers* Second Series No. 3.

**shoddy.** 1. Fiber or cloth manufactured from shredded woolen rags; hence, anything made over to look as if of superior quality. 2. Vulgar; common; sham; used also adjectively.

In New York she and hers were deemed *shoddy*—the very *shoddiest* of the *shoddy*—and were looked coldly on, and were left unvisited

OIDA *Moths* vii.

The anxiety of *shoddy* politicians to assail that address

MR RICHARDSON of Illinois, Speech in House of Representatives July 7, 1862.

—a *shoddy* character. A person with a stained or damaged reputation.

**shoe** is used with various meanings in the following idiomatic phrases.—  
**another pair of shoes.** A different matter.

"Ah! and you'll find a tiger is quite *another pair of shoes*," I assured him impressively.

MRS CROKER *Village Tales* 10.

—a *shoe on the other foot.* A subject for consideration at some other time—a *shoe that is too large trips one up.* Inordinate ambition ends in failure; a business that has grown beyond one's control comes to grief—*dead men's shoes.* Appointments or opportunities that await or depend on the deaths of present incumbents.—*no one but the wearer knows where the shoe pinches.* Only the person who suffers knows the seat or cause of the pain

A certain Roman put away his wife. When his friends remonstrated and asked him, "Was she not fair? Was she not chaste? Was she not fruitful?" he held out his shoe, and said, "Is it not handsome? Is it not new? Yet *none knows where it pinches, save he that wears it*"

WALSH *Literary Curiosities* quoting Plutarch, p. 1005.

—*over shoes, over boots.* In for a penny, in for a pound—said of one who, having incurred first cost, must incur the second to attain his object—to be or stand in *another man's shoes.* To occupy the place of another person for reward or punishment

I wish I was in *your shoes*.

J PAYN *Confidential Agent* III, 130.

—to die in one's shoes. To meet death by violence, especially, to be hanged.

And there is Mr Fuse, and Lieutenant Treegoose,

And there is Sir Carnaby Jenks of the Blues,

All come to see a man die in *his shoes*

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends* Ser. i *Execution*.

—to shoe the goose or goslin. 1. To attempt a bootless task; do anything useless or something unprofitable.

"The smith that will meddle with all things may go *shoe the goslings*," is an old proverb.

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

2. To get drunk—to shoe the wild colt. To initiate a newcomer by exacting a money-fee as footing, the *colt* being the newcomer or greenhorn—to stand in or step into another man's shoes. To take an estate, office, or post formerly occupied by another.

Among the ancient Northmen, when a man adopted a son, the person adopted put on the shoes of the adopter.

BREWSTER *Phrase and Fable*, p. 1135.

**shoestring, to own on a.** To have acquired by the payment of an insignificant sum, as a lease of a tenement.

**shoestring, to run up from a.** [U. S.] To make a fortune by small investments; to become rich from small beginnings by one's own efforts.

**shoot and shot** are used in various idiomatic phrases. See SHOT.—I'll be shot. I am surprised: usually preceded by *well* and used to indicate astonishment—to be shot of. To be rid of.—to shoot ahead. To outstrip competitors; move quickly to the front.—to shoot off one's mouth. [U. S.] See under MOUTH.—to shoot one's bolt. To exhaust one's credit and resources; to reach one's limit

The boy who won never did anything in later life. He had *shot his bolt*.

*The Daily News* London, Oct. 8, 1886.

—to shoot one's linen. To make a sudden ostentatious display of one's cuffs  
 —to shoot over the pitcher. [Australia] To brag of one's hunting.—to shoot the moon. See under MOON.—to shoot the pit. To try to escape or make a cowardly withdrawal, as a gamecock that refuses to fight.

Which made the whole party shoot the pit, and retire, as not caring to be pointed at with ill-favouring reflections NORTH *Examiner* II, v, 327.

—to shoot to spoil. To dump, as refuse, on an incline so as to cause it to roll down.  
 —to shoot up. [U S] To shoot wildly, specifically, to dash through (a town, etc.) shooting recklessly in all directions.

**shooting-iron.** A gun; especially, a revolver or small automatic pistol.

Keep your shooting irons, Mr. Hall. . . I've got a brace of my own in my pocket. KERNAHAN *Scoundrels and Co.* xxiii.

**shop.** One's own craft, calling, or business.—to come to the wrong shop. To apply at the wrong place; make a mistake.

And what does he want? . . . money? meat? drink? He's come to the wrong shop DICKENS *Sketches* 289.

—to talk shop. To discuss one's business or professional affairs or matters closely allied thereto.

Nurses are given to talking shop, and the gruesomeness of their shop makes it and them a terror to their friends. BRITISH *Medical Journal* April 12, 1902.

**shoplifter.** One who "lifts" or steals goods as from a counter in a shop; a shop-thief. Hence, **shoplifting**, stealing goods from a shop by stealth.

The papers call lady shoplifters "kleptomaniacs" ANDREW LANG *Library* 47.

**shopping, to go.** [U. S.] To make the rounds of the shops or stores to look at and price goods, but not necessarily to buy them; hence, **window shopping**, to look at the goods displayed in a shop-window.

**short.** I. a. 1. Hard up; a contraction of *short of money*.

I wrote to her and said, "I'm very short; please send me two ponies; meaning, of course, that I wanted fifty pounds. BRADLEY *Verdant Green* II, v.

2. [Financial.] (1) Not having in possession when selling, but having to procure in time to deliver as contracted; as, *short of stocks or wheat*. (2) Relating to short stocks or commodities, as, *short sales*; a *short contract*. (3) Lacking enough to meet one's agreements; as, I am still *short of Northern Pacific*. (4) Pertaining to those who have sold short or are short; as, the *short interest*. (5) Straight, undiluted, as liquor. II. n. One who has sold short; a bear —for short. For the sake of brevity, to abbreviate.

Father Dick . . . they called him for short.

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends, Brother of Birch*.

—in short. To sum up in a few words; briefly —short and plain. The whole unvarnished truth of; brief, simple statement concerning —short and sweet. Brief and pleasant; frequently used ironically.

After a conversation short and sweet, I left the steward

LE SAGE *Gil Blas* Malkan's transl. VIII, viii.

—short cut. A path between two places shorter than the regular road; hence, a means or method that saves distance or time.

He "knew the city," as we say, of yore

And for short cuts and turns, was nobody knew more. KEATS *Cap and Bells* xxiii.

—short shrift. [Brit] A brief respite; the interval formerly allowed a criminal in which to make his confession and prepare for execution. Also used in the form *short shrift and no favor*.

If he were brought to trial he would have short shrift and no favor.

JESSOP *Coming of the Friars* II, 82

—the long and the short of. See under LONG.

—the short of the matter is. The result or the upshot is

The short of the matter is this.

JOHN WESLEY *Works* XI, 39

—to come short of. See under COME.—to cut it short. See under CUT.—to fall short. See under FALL.—to stop short. 1. To cease abruptly; come to an end. 2. To halt before attaining (a place or point).—to turn short. To turn on the spot one occupies; to make a dangerous turn.

**shot.** I. *a* Intoxicated. Hence, **half shot**, fuddled with drink.—**shot in the neck.** [Brit.] Drunk. II. *n.* 1. A guess or conjecture. 2. An attempt or try at; as, let me have a *shot* at it. 3. A drink, hence, the charge for it — **like a shot.** At full drive, quickly.

Back I went *like a shot*

MITFORD *Romance of Cape Frontier*

—**not a shot in the locker.** No money in the pocket; originally a seaman's phrase  
"As long as there's *shot in the locker*, she shall want for nothing," said the generous fellow

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* xxvi

—**not by a long shot.** Not in any way; not by any manner of means.

**shoulder** is used in various idiomatic phrases as the following.—**cold shoulder.** Cold reception.—**to give one the cold shoulder.** To receive one coldly, discourage one's friendly advances.—**shoulder to shoulder.** Presenting a united front, as soldiers in close formation, united for common effort or cooperation

We are strongest when we are labouring *shoulder to shoulder* for some common object  
JESSOPP *Coming of Frars* III, 18

—**to have an old head on young shoulders.** To be wiser than one's years

You appear to have an *old head upon very young shoulders*

MARRYAT *Percival Keene* XIX

—**to put an old head on young shoulders.** To educate beyond one's years: used usually with a negative, as, try as you will *you can't put an old head on young shoulders*

—**to put or set one's shoulder to the wheel.** To labor or assist in person, to exert oneself to achieve something

They . . . instead of pushing on all *shoulders at the wheel*, will stand idle there

CARLYLE *French Revolution* III, ii, v

—**to rub shoulders with.** To come in close contact with, to be associated with  
She had *rubbed shoulders with the great*

THACKERAY *Book of Snobs* XXV

—**with one's shoulder to the collar.** Hard at work, at a fatiguing task, as when a horse travels up hill and the collar distresses his neck.

**shout.** To call for drinks; treat.—**his, my or your shout.** His, my or your turn to pay for a round of drinks.

**shouting, all over but the.** [U. S.] Everything is at an end but the applause: said, as of an election when the polls are closed, of a race practically won, or of any event just finished.

**shove the queer.** [Police Cant.] To pass counterfeit coin or bills.

**show.** 1. A theatrical, operatic, or circus performance; any gala entertainment; a state or political ceremony; a fashionable gathering or exhibition. See quotation. 2. An opportunity; a chance.

(1) It has been my vocation to see *shows*. First nights of new pieces, private views of picture exhibitions, royal marriages and funerals, laying of first stones, openings of railways

G A SALA in *Temple Bar* VIII, 278

—**a show down.** [U. S.] 1. An announcing of one's aims or purposes. 2. In poker, the privilege of a player whose stake is nearly exhausted of "calling" a bet to the extent of his stack, on which the cards are "faced"—**show-girl.** [U. S.] A tall beautiful girl who displays costumes, dances, and poses in a musical comedy—**show-window.** [U. S.] A shop window in which an unusual display of goods for sale is made—**show-woman.** [Brit.] A manikin or woman employed to display goods, as in a fashionable clothing establishment; a model.

The beautiful girls who are secured as *show-women* by the West End shops

*The Daily News* London, May 7, 1898

—**to boss or run the show.** To manage, direct, or control a theatrical production or business—**to call for a show of hands.** To ask for a vote, as when the chairman of a meeting says "all in favor will hold up their right hands"—**to give one a fair show.** To show neither partiality nor prejudice.—**to give the show away.** To disclose or reveal, as by indiscreet speech

I didn't want to *give the show away*. DELANNOY *Nineteen Thousand Pounds* XXV

—to have a or some show. To afford a chance, an opportunity, or an opening.

At the fyrst, he covered his mynde craftely, that his writte myght have some shewe.  
SLEIDANE's *Comment Daus's* trans (1560)

—to make a show of. [U. S.] To hold up to ridicule; make an ass of.—to show off.

To make an ostentatious display of one's person, belongings or accomplishments.  
An opportunity for an author to show off his powers of writing.

M. PATTISON *Milton* 192

—to show one's hand. To reveal one's plan of action, or strength; to face or lay one's cards on the table.

What are you driving at, Frank Miller? You don't show me your hand like this for nothing  
HAGGARD *Jess* xiii

—to show one's teeth. To give an evidence of anger or rage, as does a snarling dog.—to show one the door. To send off without ceremony, to dismiss abruptly.

The upshot of the matter for that while was, that she showed both of them the door.  
STEVENSON *Kidnapped* XXIII, 344

—to show to a room. To conduct one to a chamber or sitting-room. sometimes with up

As there was no fire in the room below, they had to be shown up to the library.

MRS. CARLYLE *Letters* I, 274

—to show up a person. To ridicule or hold up to contempt by discrediting a person or by revealing his faults, misdeeds, ignorance, etc

That mathematical mysticism, so mercilessly shown up by Berkeley

MILL *Examination of Hamilton's Philosophy* 478

**shucks.** [U. S.] The outer coverings of corn (maize), peas, nuts, etc.; hence, something of little or no value. Used as an exclamation of contempt.

Alexander H. Stephens, a little man, was much bundled up in several layers of clothing when he arrived. The President (Mr. Lincoln) looked down at him while he was unwinding, and then remarked, wonderingly: "Well, that's a mighty little ear for so much shucks."  
*The Evening Post* New York, April 26, 1909.

—not worth shucks. Not worth anything

**shut the stable door when the steed is stolen.** Same as to LOCK THE DOOR.

**shut up (a person).** To silence; often used as an imperative.

He nearly had a fit, and shut up at once. ELINOR GLYN *Viciss Evangeline* 134.  
Order! order! Shut up, Bouncer! BEDE *Verdant Green* I, viii.

**shut up shop.** 1. To retire from business; to withdraw from or wind up any enterprise.

The Royal Society might just as well be invited to shut up shop, because Newton made huge discoveries  
GEN. P. THOMPSON *Audi Alt* III, 95

2. To cease talking.

Beautie, shut up thy shop (i.e., mouth).

GAESCOIGNE *Works* II, 571.

**shut your mouth.** Be silent; hold your tongue; stop your clatter: a vulgarism

Shut your mouth, dame,

Or with this paper shall I stop it.

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act I, sc. 3.

**shy at, to have a.** To make an attempt to do.

An honest man has a much better chance on the turf than he has in the City . . .  
I've had a shy at both  
NORRIS *Miss Shafte* vii.

**shyster.** [U. S.] A tricky and disreputable person; hence, **shystering**, the sharp practises of a shyster.

They looked on a prominent civic official as a mere shyster. BLACK *Green Pastures* xi

**sick.** 1. [U. S.] Disabled by disease; in bad health: a Shakespearian and Biblical use, for which the modern English idiom is *ill*.

The resolutions were rushed through the Senate of New Jersey when four members were sick.  
O. J. VICTOR *Hist. of the Southern Rebellion* I, 356.

2. [Brit.] Nausea or vomiting, in modern usage.

—**sick as a dog, horse, rat, etc.** Intensives for illness.

I am *sick as a horse*, quoth I, already.

STERNE *Tristram Shandy* VII, ii.

—**the Sick Man.** The Sultan of Turkey or the Ottoman Empire: a name given by Nicholas of Russia in 1844.—**to make one sick.** To disgust or displease one.

You *make me sick* with your silly fears.

HEADON *Hill Caged* xxxiv.

**side.** [Brit.] Superciliousness of manner; pretentious display; swank.—**to put on side.** To give oneself airs; to be arrogant; to show off.

**side-light.** Indirect information.

**siesta.** [Sp.] An afternoon sleep or rest taken after the noon-day meal during the hottest part of the day, especially in Spain and some tropical climates.

I must go and get my *siesta* or I shall be as stupid as an owl all evening.

MISS BRADDON *Mount Royal* I, viii, 243.

**sigh for.** To wish ardently for.

**sight** is used idiomatically in the following phrases.—**after sight.** After presentation: said of a draft or note.—**a sight for sore eyes.** Some one that one is glad to see; something pleasant to look upon; sometimes used ironically.

He was a *sight for sore eyes*. . . . I like to see a man that is a man.

MARSH *Crime and Criminal* xxiii.

—**a sight of.** [U S] A deal or quantity of

She expresses herself more warmly than the rest, for she sends him a "*sight of thanks* "

JANE AUSTEN *Letters* I, 231.

—**at sight.** On presentation: said of a draft.—**out of sight.** Without rival in view; beyond comparison

—**to make a sight of oneself.** 1. To dress (oneself) freakishly. 2. To behave in such a way as to attract too much attention.

It was not very easy to our primitive friends to *make themselves sights* and spectacles, and the scorn and derision of the world.

PENN *Rise of the Quakers* (1694),

**silent as the grave.** Mute as the dead; making not a sound.

"Livesey," said the squire, "I'll be as *silent as the grave* "

STEVENSON *Treasure Island* vi, 49.

**silk, to take.** To become a King's (or queen's) counsel, whose official robe is of silk, while that of a barrister is of stuff.

Mr. Reid's rise has been sure and steady. Called at the age of twenty-five, he took *silk* only eleven years later

*The Globe* London, May 6, 1890.

**silken bond or tie.** Love, affection

Thou' nature gives you power

To bind his duty, 'tis with *silken bonds*.

DRYDEN *Marriage a la Mode* act ii, sc. 1.

The silver link, the *silken tie*,

Which heart to heart, and mind to mind

In body and in soul can bind.

SCOTT *Lay of the Last Minstrel* v, 13.

**silk purse out of a sow's ear, you can not make a.** You can not make anything refined out of something coarse and rude.

A *sow's ear* may somewhat resemble a purse, and a curled pig's tail may somewhat resemble a twisted horn, but a *sow's ear* cannot be made into a *silk purse*, nor a pig's tail into a cow's horn.

BREWER *Phrase and Fable*.

**silk-stocking gentry.** [Brit.] The wealthier classes, silk stockings having formerly been considered luxuries.

**silkworm.** [Brit.] A woman who frequently goes shopping, but buys nothing.

The fellow who drove her came to us, and discovered that he was ordered to come again in an hour, for that she was a *silkworm*. I was surprised with this phrase, but found it was cant among the hackney fraternity for their best customers, women who ramble, twice or thrice a week from shop to shop, to turn over all the goods in town without buying anything

STEEL *Spectator* No. 1564.

**silly ass.** [Eng.] A person given to idiotic blundering; "a blooming idiot."  
**silver-fork school.** Thackeray's name for novelists who were sticklers for the graces of society.

Up to the heights of fashion with the charming enchanters of the *silver-fork school*.  
 THACKERAY.

**silver key.** Bribery.

I was given to understand that the door, contrary to other doors, would not open with a *silver key*.  
 W. HUTTON *Autobiography* 41.

**silver link.** The bond of affection. Compare SILKEN BOND.

**Silver State.** [U. S.] Nevada: so called from its silver mines.

**silver-tongued.** Sweet-spoken; eloquent; as, the *silver-tongued* orator of the Platte (William Jennings Bryan).

*Silver-tongued* Hope promised another Harvest. POLLOCK *Course of Time* VII, 178.

**silver wedding.** See under WEDDING.

**Simon pure, or the real Simon pure.** The genuine article: in allusion to Simon Pure, a character in the old comedy, by Mrs. Centlivre, A *Bold Stroke for a Wife*, who is impersonated by an impostor.

I should like to see what you call the *Simon-pure* American  
 HOWELL'S *Lady of the Aroostook* XXV.

**simple life.** Life characterized by sincerity, artlessness, plain living, and uprightness. The phrase became a household word after the publication of the English translation of Pastor Charles Wagner's book, "The Simple Life."

What is the *simple life*? . . . It is a form of life described by pastoral poets, or the New Testament, but not livable to-day.  
 WAGNER *The Simple Life* VII.

**simples, to go to Battersea to be cut for.** [Brit.] To take the cure of foolishness, Battersea being famous for its herb gardens.

In the Lords and Commons (what evils might be averted) by clearing away bile, evacuating ill humours, and occasionally by *cutting for the simples*.

SOUTHEY *Doctor* cxxxvi.

**sin, a child or man of.** A wicked or dissolute person. See under MAN.  
 From the palace came a *child of sin*. TENNYSON *Vision of Sin* 5.

**sin, as black as.** Lowering; scowling; sullen or angry.

They bowed civilly if folks took off their bonnets as they gazed by, and looked as *black as sin* at them that kept it on  
 SCOTT *Chronicles of Canongate* IV.

**sine die.** [L.] Without day; finally; as, an adjournment *sine die* (that is, without setting a day for reassembling).

The fête was postponed *sine die*.  
 BARHAM *Ingloldsby Leg* Ser. ii, *St. Cuthbert* vi.

**sine qua non.** [L.] Literally, without which not; that which is absolutely indispensable.

Which kind of Philosophers (saith he) do not seem to me, to distinguish betwixt the True and Proper Cause of things, and the Cause *Sine qua non*.

CUDWORTH *Intell. Syst.* I, iv, 382.

**sineus of war.** Money.

Widow Maxey had only become reconciled to her abdication, because, as was well known, she had remained in possession of the *sineus of war*—that is, the actual proprietorship of the horse and cart, in addition to her savings.  
 SARAH TYTLER.

If you had the *sineus of war*, I am sure you would be flying out.

DRYDEN *Even. Love* III, i

**sing for, to give one something to.** [Brit.] To provide a reason for crying: used as a threat to fretful or peevish children

**sing small.** To lower one's tone or reduce one's demands; eat humble pie.  
 See under EAT.

**sing-song.** 1. [Brit.] An entertainment to which each person contributes a song.

The illustrated programme of the *sing-song*, whereof he was not a little proud

KIPLING *Only a Subaltern*

2. [Pidgin-English.] A Chinese theater. 3. A crooning or monotonous chant.

I was amused at the clipping tones and the odd *sing song* in which he spoke

STEVENSON *Kidnapped* 197

**sing to another song or tune.** To modify one's speech, manner, course or attitude.

**sink or swim.** Fail or succeed.

*Sink or swim*, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and heart to this vote

DANIEL WEBSTER *Eulogy on Adams and Jefferson*

**Sister Anne.** A loyal woman friend: from the sister of Bluebeard's seventh and last wife, according to Charles Perrault's tale, but a despicable conspirator in Anatole France's new version.

"*Sister Anne* is on the watch-tower," said he to Amelia; "but there's nobody coming."

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair*

**sit** is used with varying significance in the following phrases.—**to make**

**one sit up.** To compel attention; cause one to take immediate notice of; awaken one to a fact or condition, force one to listen attentively — **to sit down**

**before.** To invest, as a city in war, besiege — **to sit down with.** [Brit.] To accept a situation one can not avoid, be compelled to bow to circumstances — **to sit eggs.**

[Brit.] To outstay one's welcome, remain too long as a guest — **to sit for.** 1. To

pose or assume a position, as, *to sit for* a portrait. 2. [Eng.] To undergo an examination, as for a fellowship in a university — **to sit in one's shirt-sleeves.** To be

seated after having removed one's coat, as, *he was sitting in his shirt-sleeves* at his desk — **to sit loose or loosely.** To be indifferent or thoughtless — **to sit on or upon.** 1.

To hold a meeting over; examine officially, hold an inquest 2. To repress with authority or by sarcasm or rebuke, snub

Our slang use of *sit upon* is foreshadowed . . . the King intends to *sitte* upon a criminal, that is, in judgment

PASTON *Letters* 235

He allowed himself to be *sat upon* gracefully; a snub well administered to him was sure of its full artistic, and did not fail of its moral effect

G GISSING *Life's Morning* iii

—**to sit on a man's skirts.** [Brit.] 1. To show contempt for

Many began . . . *to sit upon the Bishops' skirts*, that is, to controvert the notes and bounds of their authority.

H. I. L'ESTRANGE *Charles I* 184

2. To punish severely, wreak vengeance upon 3. To insult or pick a quarrel — **to sit on brood.** To deliberate (upon) deeply; meditate upon; think over seriously — **to sit on one's knees.** 1. To kneel 2. To rest on the lap of — **to sit on pins and needles, tacks, or thorns.** To be in a state of anxiety or uncertainty, also, to be

in pain or discomfort — **to sit out.** 1. To await the close of with patience and resignation 2. To sit apart during; refrain from taking part in, as, *to sit out* a dance

If I see any kneel, and I *sit out*, That hour is not well spent

MIDDLETON *Mayor of Queensborough* act 1, sc. 2

3. To stay longer than — **to sit tight.** To wait quietly for the next move — **to sit under.** To be a student in the class of or a member of the congregation of; be a

listener to.

At this time he *sat* (in puritanical language) *under* the ministry of holy Mr. Gifford

SOUTHEY *Bunyan* 25

—**to sit up.** 1. To assume a sitting posture; as, the patient may *sit up* to-morrow; a dog *sits up* and begs; keep watch or nurse during the night usually followed by

*with*; as, I will *sit up with* you to-night; to await the return of during the night: usually followed by *for* 2. To assume a position of attention 3. To arouse the attention of, awaken to facts

The fashion papers of Paris make even America *sit up*. *The Free Lance*, Oct. 6, 1902.

4. To refrain from retiring to rest by awaiting the return of usually with *for*.



**six-and-eightpence.** [Brit.] Literally, six shillings and eight pence, the fee formerly charged by lawyers for a consultation; hence, a lawyer: a derogatory use.

**sixes and sevens, at.** In confusion; dismay.

All is uneven,  
And everything is left *at six and seven.* SHAKESPEARE *Richard II* act ii, sc. 2.  
All goes to *sixes and sevens*—an universal saturnalia seems to be proclaimed in my peaceful and orderly family. SCOTT *Antiquary* xxi.

**six of one and half-a-dozen of the other.** Like to like; not a pin to choose between; an even break or split, differing in nothing; essentially identical.

I never knows the children It's just *six of one and half-a-dozen of the other.*

**sixty, to go like.** [U. S.] To travel fast; go with great speed. Sometimes contracted to **like sixty** and used as an intensive for "very much"; "greatly."

"Like one o'clock," "like winking," and "to go like sixty," all imply briskness and rapidity of motion. *Household Words* Sept 18, 1886

**size down.** To grade on a diminishing scale.—**to size up.** 1. To form one's opinion of; as, *to size up* the candidate. 2. To take into consideration the points of; as, *to size up* a proposition. 3. To estimate roughly; as, *to size up* the cost of a building

**skedaddle.** To spill (as milk over the brim of a pail); spread abroad (as apples dropped out of a basket); scatter; hence, to spread or scatter in headlong flight, as panic-stricken troops.

We used to live in Lancashire and heard *skedaddle* every day of our lives. It means to scatter or drop in a scattering way *The Atlantic Monthly* xl, 234

For their men *skedaddled*, and the Secession cavalry slipping after them, had a very pretty chase *J. Russell Diary North and South II*, 421

**skeezicks.** [U. S.] A scamp, rascal or rogue: used in contempt or jocularly.

**skeleton at the feast.** A constant reminder of death, of some impending fate or disagreeable fact: from the Egyptian custom of having a skeleton at feasts to remind the revelers of death.

**skeleton in the closet.** The secret care, shameful or distressing occurrence or condition, in a family that one strives to hide from the world; the family secret.

Some particulars regarding the Newcome family, which will show us that they have a *skeleton* or two in their closets, as well as their neighbours

THACKERAY *Newcomes* lv.

**skies, to the.** In an extreme manner: said of honor or praise.

**skimble-scamble.** Incoherent rambling; meaningless jargon; gibberish.

**skimp.** 1. To give a niggardly allowance to; dole out; stint; scamp. 2. To give short weight or measure. 3. To make, as a dress, out of insufficient material.

The woman who has . . . schemed and *skimped* to achieve her attire, knows the real pleasure and victory of self-adornment *Egleston Graysons* xix.

4. To do poorly or carelessly or in an inefficient manner.—**skimpy.** Scantily or carelessly made.

**skin, n.** 1. A mean person; a close bargainer. 2. A common swindler; cheat.—**escape by or with the skin of one's teeth.** By a very nar-

row margin; in spite of great odds; very closely or narrowly: in allusion to *Job* xix, 20, "I am escaped with the skin of my teeth."

He reckoned himself only *escaped with the skin of his teeth*, that he had nothing left

CLARENDON *Contemplations* 510

—**in or with a whole skin.** Without injury to the body.—**skin-game.** [U. S.] A confidence trick or swindle.—**to save one's skin.** To get off without bodily injury; to escape without loss.

A poltroon who was ever considering how to *save his skin*.

STEBBING *Peterborough* vii, 155.

**skin, v.** 1. To take off, as if by peeling; as, to *skin* off one's gloves. 2. To deprive by trickery; cheat; swindle. 3. To do anything unfair or in an underhand way, as, to *skin* through an examination (to copy fraudulently answers to questions).—**to skin a flint, or a flea for its hide and tallow.** To display excessive avarice, be mean or miserly.

Report says that she would *skin a flint* if she could. MARRYAT *Peter Simple* 195

Just as the toper squeezes the bottle and the miser *skins the flint*

BESANT *Children of Gibeon* II, xxxii.

MAYHEW *London Labor* I, 134.

They'd *skin a flea for his hide and tallow*.

—**to skin out.** To range widely, as a dog used in hunting.—**to skin the cat.** In gymnastics, to turn one's legs and body through one's arms while hanging by the hand, from a bar

**skip.** 1. To flee the country; abscond; make off quickly.

The granger schoolmaster *skipped* the country this week

MILNOR (Dakota) *Teller*, Sept. 12, 1884

2. To pass without notice

It is fashionable to say . . . that the mental energy *skips* a generation.

ALLEN *Darwin* II, 25

3. To leave out; omit. 4. To spring lightly; bound or rebound; jump with a rope.

—**to skip over.** To pass over lightly or unnoticed

I might have *skipped over* these difficulties like the proverbial chamois.

L. STEPHEN *Playground of Europe* X, 248

**skipjack.** 1. A flat broad-bowed sailboat that skips over the surface of the water. 2. A conceited puppy; an upstart; also, an irresponsible boaster; a braggart. 3. A stable-boy who shows off horses before a sale; hence, a jockey. 4. A toy made from a merry-thought, a match and a bit of twisted thread or an elastic band. 5. One of various fishes.

**skirt.** [U. S. & Australia.] A girl; a woman: used in contempt.—**at one's skirts.** In close attendance; immediately following, by one's side.

**skit.** A literary lampoon, humorous or satirical; light parody or caricature. He did not deserve your *skit* about his "Finsbury Circus gentility."

E. FITZGERALD *Letters* I, 421.

**skittles.** [Brit.] Rubbish; nonsense: used chiefly as an interjection, as "Oh, *skittles!*" with the meaning "Stuff and nonsense!"

**skunk.** [U. S.] 1. A despicably vile creature; an evil-minded person. 2. An American carnivorous animal which secretes fluid of most offensive odor that it ejects when defending itself against attack.

**sky.** 1. To hang, as pictures, near the ceiling; hence, to give an unfavorable position to.

A good sea-piece, and one which is undeservedly *skied*. Truth London, May 18, 1885.

2. To strike (a ball) into the air, as in cricket.

He *skied* the ball to cover-point.

The Times London, Sept. 28, 1880

3. To lift (an oar-blade) too high in rowing.

He knows when men are cocking *skying*, or swinging out of or into the boat.

Cambridge Staircase VI, 94.

—**if the sky fall, we shall catch larks.** When the unexpected happens we shall profit. Used also in ridicule, as of any visionary scheme, with the force of "pigs might fly if they had wings," but they are very unlikely birds.

The stationary state may turn out after all to be the millennium of economic expectation, but for anything we know *the sky may fall and we may be catching larks* before that millennium arrives. *The Contemporary Review* 1886.

—**sky-parlor.** A garret.

The illustrious tenants of the theatrical *sky-parlor*

WASHINGTON IRVING *Salmagundi* (1807-8)

The necessities of life which she would convey to his *sky-parlor*.

LE QUEUX *Temptress* iii.

—**sky-pilot.** A clergyman or other preacher.

A *sky-pilot*, in sailor's parlance, is a clergyman generally, and especially a clergyman who has a charge among seamen. *The Spectator* London, Dec. 30, 1893.

—**skyscraper.** 1. [U S.] A very tall building. 2. [Brit.] A tall man or woman. 3. [Naut.] A triangular skysail

**slam.** 1. [U. S.] To find fault with continually; criticize captiously; decry habitually. 2. In card playing to take every trick. 3. [Brit.] (1) To boost. (2) To feign drunkenness.

**slang-whang.** To talk boisterously and abusively.—**slang-whanger.** [U. S.] One who rants or rails at abusively; a noisy or careless writer or speaker.

Men know the character of their Government, and they also know that "coercion" and "subjugation" is merely ad captandum, idle and unmeaning *slang-whangery*.

MR ANDREW JOHNSON of Tennessee (afterwards President of the United States), Speech in the United States Senate, Jan. 31, 1862.

**slap-bang shop.** [Brit.] A petty cook-shop where food is served indiscriminately and where no credit is given; any low eating-place.

Refreshments served with no more style than at what we term a "*slap-bang*."

MATHEW *Upper Rhine* III, 106.

**slap in the face.** An insult or a sudden rebuff.

**slap-up.** [Brit.] Superior in style or quality; fine and good; grand, first-class, first-rate.

We'll have a good round, square, *slap-up* meal at seven.

JEROME K. JEROME *Three Men in a Boat* iv, 53.

**slate.** 1. [U. S. Politics.] A party ticket or list of nominees made by the leaders or bosses of a party in advance of which they will exert all their influence to have a primary or convention and put into nomination.

*Slates* have been arranged in which all conflicting claims have been nicely adjusted. *The Nation* New York lvi, 158.

2. [Brit.] (1) To censure, reprimand, blow-up. (2) To review or criticize severely, as a book or play

None the less I'll *slate* him I'll *slate* him ponderously in the cataclysm

KIPLING *The Light That Failed* iv.

—**to break or smash the slate.** [U S Politics.] To defeat the plans of party leaders in making a slate.

**slathers.** [U. S.] A great quantity; an abundance.

I am going to be a clown in the circus. They get *slathers* of money—most a dollar a day. MARK TWAIN *Tom Sawyer* 175.

**slave-driver.** An exacting employer; strict disciplinarian; a hard task-master.

A ferocious looking fellow with a scourge, who was the *slave-driver* of the ship.

R. WALSH *Notices of Brazil* II, 480.

The sweater himself, a mere *slave-driver*, paid by the piece.

G. B. SHAW *Fabian Essays* 193

**slavey.** [Brit.] A household servant of either sex; a drudge; usually, a maid servant.

The boy Thomas, otherwise called *Slavey*, has been instructed to bring soda whenever he hears the word *slavey* pronounced from above. THACKERAY *Newcomes* XI  
No well-conducted English girl need be a *slavey* at all.

*The Daily Telegraph* London, April 1, 1886.

**slavocracy.** The slave-owners whose influence prevailed in the political councils of the Southern States before the War of Secession: sometimes erroneously applied to the entire white population of these States.

**sleep.** 1. To be in a benumbed state, as the feet from being long in one position. 2. To rest in death; be dead. 3. [Brit.] To provide sleeping accommodations.

They were to have a double row of beds, "two tire" high, to admit of sleeping 100 men and 60 women. RIPTON-TURNER *Vagrants and Vagrancy* 399

—to fall asleep. To die —to go to sleep. To fall into a state of sleep —to sleep in. To sleep at night at one's place of employment opposed to to sleep out, to sleep in one's own home or lodgings —to sleep on or upon. To postpone a decision on

**sleeping account.** An inactive account or one long outstanding

**sleeping partner.** A partner who takes no real part in the business; a secret partner

Your father, though his fortune was vested in the house, was only a *sleeping partner*, as the commercial phrase goes. SCOTT *Rob Roy* I

**sleep-waker.** One who performs waking acts while in a trance or subject to hypnotism.

**sleep-walker.** A person who walks while asleep.

**sleeve** is used idiomatically in the following phrases: to hang on to one's sleeve. To be dependent on one.—to hang or pin on the sleeve. To make dependent —to have in or up one's sleeve. To have at hand for use as in emergency from the former use of the sleeve as a pocket —to wear one's heart on one's sleeve. To show one's feelings plainly

**sleight of hand.** Skill in juggling tricks; the art or practise of legerdemain; also, an example of this.

Vivian, you are a juggler, and the deceptions of your *sleight-of-hand* tricks depend upon instantaneous motions. BEACONSFIELD *Vivian Grey* III, viii

To make a murderer out of a prince,

A *sleight of hand* I learned long since.

LONGFELLOW *Golden Legend*

**slick.** 1. Smooth-tongued; oily. 2. Dexterous in action or motion; clever; easy; smart; quick; clean; neat.

—as slick as a whistle. With dexterity, easily, neatly

The wind carried away the roof as *slick as a whistle*. *The Chicago Tribune* April, 1909  
—to slick up. [U S] 1. To make a careful toilette, to primp 2. To put in order

(1) Mrs. Flyer was *slicked up* for the occasion, in the snuff-colored silk she was married in. CLAYERS *Montacute* 211

(2) The house was all *slicked up* as neat as a pin. MAJOR DOWNING *Mayday* 43

**sling ink, to.** To write profusely and carelessly, especially for publication. Compare INK-SLINGER.

**slink.** [Brit.] A sneak, skulk, shirk: used also as a verb.

**slip a cog.** Make an error unconsciously.

**slip from or out of one's hands or grasp or through one's fingers.**

To be lost; to escape; get away.

Wealth by various means *slips from the possessor's hands*. JORTIN *Serm.* I, 132

To exercise the authority in the land which *slips from the grasp* of the monarch

JAMES AGNES *Sorel* I, 19

So, between them, the lady generally *slipped through their fingers*.

WASHINGTON IRVING *Salmagundi* 125

**slip into one.** 1. [Brit.] To strike a sharp blow or give a sound beating.

2. To glide or steal into; to pass quickly and softly into.

(1) When you know how to use your fists . . . *slip into him*

SMEDLEY *Frank Fairleigh* 3.

(2) I heard the King's voice I *slipped into* my room, but he saw me.

MME D'ARBLAY *Diary* July 25, 1786.

**slip of the tongue.** 1. A mistake made by inadvertence. 2. A revelation made unintentionally.

**slipshod.** Wearing shoes trodden out at the heels; worn down; hence, careless, slovenly.

Thy wit shall ne'er go *slipshod*

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act i, sc. 5.

**slip up.** [U. S.] To make a failure of, make a mistake

He *slipped up*, somehow, on each thing that he struck BRET HARTE *Dow's Flat* iii.

**slop.** [Brit.] 1. Any liquid food, as a gruel. 2. Weak tea. Hence, **slip-slop**, weak, poor, feeble.

At length the coffee was announc'd,  
think the call should be obey'd'

'And since the meagre *slip-slop's* made, I  
COMBE *Dr Syntax in Search of a Wife* I, 260

**slop over.** [U. S.] To bubble over with enthusiasm or sentiment; gush.

One of his great distinctions was his moderation . . . he never *slopped over*.

*Harper's Magazine* LXXVII, 818

**sloppy.** [Brit.] Slovenly; loose; inefficient

Teach a great number of sciences and languages in an elementary and *sloppy* way.  
*The Academy* London, March 20, 1890

**slouch.** 1. A clumsy lout. 2. A lumpy, awkward gait or carriage; hence, **débutante slouch**, an affected stooping, shambling gait.

—no **slouch.** [U. S.] A smart, bright, shrewd person

**Slough of Despond.** A bog full of the scum and filth of sin described in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*; hence, any condition of extreme despondency.

Musical criticism has been in the same *Slough of Despond*

HAWES *My Musical Life* I, 137.

**slow-coach.** [Brit.] A sluggard, laggard; an idle, indolent, lazy person; one who acts or works, slowly.

There are plenty of lazy people and plenty of *slow-coaches*, but a genuine idler is a rarity.  
JEROME K JEROME *Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow* 42.

**slubberdegullion.** A base wretch; mean, dirty fellow; hence, by extension, anything paltry, dirty.

Thou hast deserved,  
Base *slubberdegullion*, to be served  
As thou didst vow to deal with me

BUTLER *Hudibras* I, iii, 885.

**slum.** 1. A squalid street or neighborhood; a disreputable district in a city. 2. A low degraded person.—to **slum.** To explore slums out of philanthropy or curiosity.

Gone is the Rookery, a conglomeration of *slums* and alleys in the heart of St. Giles.

EDMUND YATES *London Life* I, ii.

**slump.** A fall in prices affecting securities or commodities; a sudden and heavy decline in anything.

**sly, on the, under the or by the.** Without publicity or openness; secretly; clandestinely, stealthily.

They sold it to ladies that like a drop *on the sly*

MAYHEW *London Labor* I, 387

As soon as you see the planets are out, in with you, and be busy with the ten commandments, *under the sly*

LONGFELLOW *Spanish Student* III, v

It seems to me disgraceful to do things *by the sly*, that you dare not have known.

GEORGE ELIOT *Adam Bede* VII.

**small potatoes.** [U. S.] A petty or insignificant person or thing; also, any action that is deemed unworthy

**small talk.** Unimportant or trivial conversation; mild gossip; prattle. A sort of chit-chat, or *small talk*, which is the general run of conversation . . . in most mixed companies. CHESTERFIELD *Letters* June 20, 1751

**smart.** 1. [U. S.] Bright, intelligent; clever, quick, and active; also, shrewd; unscrupulous.

The gentlemen from New York are quicker, and to use a common word in my country, *smarter* than we are in Pennsylvania.

MR. CAMERON of Penn in U S Senate, Feb 22, 1859

2. [Brit.] Sprucely dressed; showy in appearance; out of the ordinary; distinguished; fashionable

It was all the Colonel's fault He said the regiment wasn't *smart* enough

KIPLING *Rout of White Hussars*

—**the smart set.** The stylish classes, the fashionable world

Among *the smart set*, and under the surface, little is impossible.

WHITE *West End* 19.

**smart Aleck.** [U. S.] A cocksure and opinionated person whose conceit of smartness leads to his discomfiture.

[I saw] at least a score of *smart Alecks* relieved of their surplus cash.

J H BEADLE *The Undeveloped West* 140.

**smash.** A break-up of any kind; especially, a disaster.—**to go to smash.** To fail in business; be ruined.

**smell.** I. *n.* A faint suggestion, hint, trace. II. *v.* 1. To detect or discover, or seek to know, as if by smelling; as, to *smell* treason. 2. To give indications of, as if by odor; as, to *smell* of the shop—**smelling committee.** [U. S. Politics] An investigating committee.—**to smell a rat** or **mouse.** To suspect something; to detect something wrong.

He'll be sure to *smell a rat* if I'm with you.

HOWELLS in *Harper's Magazine* Feb. 377

—**to smell of the lamp, library, oil, candle,** etc. To show evidence of long and tedious night labor, or of laborious research

Even his letters to his sister, *smell* too much of the lamp.

HALLAM *Hist Lit*

His sentences *smell* of the library

LOWELL *Study Windows* 282

—**to smell out.** To discover by investigation, as a dog does by scent.

**smile.** [U. S.] I. *n.* A drink of liquor; also, the act of treating at a bar. II. *v.* To take a drink.

"Say, stranger! Won't you *smile*?" (I had been smiling unremittingly—I could not help it.) But, in America, *smiling*, seeing a man, and liquoring up, are all one.

RICHARD A PROCTOR *Notes on Americanisms in Knowledge*

—**I should smile.** [U. S.] I should say so; there can be no doubt about it. used as an affirmation or to indicate agreement with something previously said.

We asked Joe Capp the other day,

And asked it without guile,

"If asked to drink, what would you say?"

He answered, "*I should smile.*"

WILLIAM S. WALSH in *Literary Curiosities* p. 1016.

**smite hip and thigh.** To defeat mercilessly.

And he *smote* them *hip and thigh* with a great slaughter.

Judges xv, 8.

**smite with the tongue.** To heap abuse upon.

**smoke.** I. *n.* 1. A cigar. 2. Anything transient or ephemeral. 3. Speed: said of balls pitched in baseball. 4. Fog, especially white fog: an African use. II. *v.* 1. To suspect or get the scent of anything underhanded. 2. To quip or hold up to ridicule. 3. To raise dust, as by departing with speed or by riding or driving hurriedly. 4. To cause improper combustion in: said of the engine of an automobile.—**a dry smoke.** An unlighted cigar carried between the teeth.—**like smoke.** Very quickly or rapidly; as, he vanished *like smoke*.—**smoke-dried.**

Dried or cured by the application of smoke.—**smoke-money, penny, or silver.** [Eng.] 1. A tithe paid in cash to the rector of a parish instead of in kind (fire-wood). 2. A fee charged for cutting peat or turf in the waste of the New Forest.—**smoke-oh.** [Australia] A short interval of rest from work, giving time to smoke.—**smoker.** [U S.] 1. An evening entertainment for men, as at a social club, at which smoking is permitted, a smoking-concert. 2. A railroad car reserved for smokers.—**there is no smoke without fire.** There is no effect without a cause.

You must allow *there is no Smoke but there is some Fire.*

WYCHERLEY in *Pope's Letters* I, 14.

—**to come to, go up in or vanish into smoke.** To come to nothing; to fail of realization. Compare **END IN SMOKE**.—**to smoke the calumet or pipe of peace.** To be reconciled, make peace: from the American custom of thus celebrating a treaty of peace.

**smug.** 1. A person who thanks God he is not like other men; an affectedly nice, self-complacent or ostentatiously proper person; a prig. 2. [Eng.] A student given to study and averse to the social life of a university.

**smut.** I. *n.* Indecency; obscenity; obscene language. II. *v.* 1. To affect with smut; defame; pollute; render obscene.—**smutty.** Affected with smut; dirty; indecent; obscene.

**snag.** 1. [U. S.] A hidden or an unsuspected obstacle or obstruction; an impediment or embarrassment: from the submerged tree-trunks rising from the bottom of a river which prove dangerous to navigation. 2. The remnant of the root of a tooth.—**snag-boat.** [U S] A boat, usually with two hulls and one superstructure, equipped for removing logs and trees or snags from rivers.—**snagged.** [U. S.] Caught on a snag; impeded.—**to hit, run into, or strike a snag.** [U. S.] To run into sudden and unexpected danger, be snagged.

You must steer clear of me in your speculations, or maybe you will *strike a snag.*

SOL SMITH *Adventures* 144.

**snail.** A slow or lazy person: from the slowness of the snail when in motion.—**a snail's gallop or pace.** Very slowly.

The *snail's pace* at which we were proceeding. BORROW *The Bible in Spain* xiv.

**snake.** A treacherous person.—**a snake in the grass.** A secret or treacherous enemy.—**snake-doctor.** A dragon-fly.—**snake-eater.** The secretary-bird.—**snakefish.** A snake-like fish, as the bandfish, the lizard-fish, etc.—**snakeflower.** One of various plants, as the bugloss, the white dead-nettle, the starflower, etc.—**snakehead.** 1. A plant, the figwort. 2. A South-American turtle.—**snake-lily.** An iris, the blue-flag.—**snakemouth.** A plant, one of the orchids.—**snake-neck.** 1. A bird, the darter. 2. A turtle.—**snake-ut.** The fruit of a large tree of British Guiana: named from the resemblance of the embryo in the seed to a coiled snake.—**snake-root.** One of various plants whose roots are reputed remedies for snake-bites.—**snake's-beard.** A plant of the bloodwort family with white or lilac flowers growing in clusters.—**snake-stone.** 1. A spiral fossil shell supposed to be a fossilized coiled snake. 2. A porous absorbent substance, as chalk or animal charcoal popularly believed to be efficacious in snake-bites. 3. A honeystone. 4. [Scot.] The prehistoric stone spindle-whorl.—**snake's tongue.** The adder's-tongue fern.—**snakewood.** 1. A large climbing plant of Ceylon, India and Java, the root of which is reported valuable in the cure of cobra-bites and skin-diseases. 2. One of various trees as (1) the greenheart; (2) the leopardwood; (3) the trumpet-tree; (4) the serpentwood.—**to have or to see snakes.** To suffer from delirium tremens.—**to wake snakes.** 1. To engage in boisterous frolic and so rouse everyone. 2. To terrorize or stir up any cause that strikes terror in.

**snap.** 1. Spirit; vigor of character or style; force; vim. 2. A thing of little value, as, I don't care a *snap* about it.—**a soft snap.** A task or duty easy to perform; an easy position; a profitable deal; a bargain.

I stepped out, thinking I was going to get some *soft snap*, such as running a saw or grist mill.

W. PITTENGER *Great Locomotive Chase* 37.

—**not to care a snap.** To be altogether indifferent —**not worth a snap.** To be quite valueless —**snap judgment or vote.** [U S] A decision made prematurely or without due notification, or a vote taken without due consideration, hurriedly, without argument or discussion

We are not to be taken by surprise, and these important measures forced upon the country by a *snap judgment*

MR GIDDINGS of Ohio, Speech in House of Representatives Aug 12, 1850

—**snap one's fingers at.** To defy, ignore or show one's contempt for.

It is not until you have *snapped your fingers* in Fortune's face that she begins to smile upon you

JEROME K JEROME *Idle Thoughts* 36

—**snap one's head (or nose) off.** To speak in anger, sharply, ungraciously, curtly

If I had not been quite sure he would have *snapped my head off*

F ROBINSON *Courting May Smith* I, xiv.

Old G *snapped my nose off* for saying I had sent for him

MRS DELANT *Life and Correspondence* II, 166

—**snappish.** Peevish, looking for trouble a phrase borrowed from the kennel.

**snappy.** [U.S.] Full of energy; lively; quick; vigorous; vivacious; as, a *snappy* dance or tune.

Lacrosse, a game well suited to the American taste, being short, *snappy* and vivacious

Book of Sports 118.

—**make it snappy.** [U S] Be quick about it; put vigor and energy into it.

**snarl.** An entangling dispute or quarrel; a wrangle.

**snarleyow.** [Humorous.] A dog. from *snarl* and *ow* in bow-wow.

**snatch.** 1. Something hastily seized or taken, as a fragment of food, a short period of time. 2. An evasive or irrelevant reply; a quibble.—  
by or in *snatches.* By fits and starts; in a disconnected way.

**sneakers or sneaks, pl.** Soft-soled, noiseless shoes or slippers.

*Sneaks* are shoes with canvas tops and wide rubber soles

GREENWOOD *In Strange Company* 321

**sneak-thief.** [U. S.] A thief who gets into houses through open or unfastened doors or windows.

They ain't no class . . . Fancies themselves burglars—Nothin' o' the sort—*sneak-thieves.*

WHITEING *John Street* V.

**sneezed at, not to be.** Not to be disregarded, despised or underrated.

A thousand pounds . . . was not a thing to be *sneezed at.* GOULD *Double Event* 82.

**sneezer.** [Brit.] A hard blow, severe frost, bad weather; something unusual or severe.

"It will be a *sneezer*," said the boatman

DOWLING *Tempest Driven* 24.

**snickersnee.** A large knife, equally suited for cutting or thrusting: from the Dutch words meaning to "cut and thrust." Hence, a fight with knives.

As I gnashed my teeth

When from its sheath, I drew my *snickersnee*

W. S GILBERT *Mikado* act ii

**snifter.** 1. [U. S.] A violent storm; a blizzard. 2. A strong breeze, a rough wind. 3. [U. S.] A drink of spirits; a dram 4. [Brit.] A cold in the head: usually in the plural.

(1) There came a *snifter* from the hills that caught her unprepared, making her reel again.

BULLEN *Cruise of the Cachalot* 110.

(3) An elderly female, drawing a black pint bottle from the pocket of her dress, proceeded to take a *snifter.*

DERBY *Phaniziana* 148.

**snippish, snippy.** 1. Peevish; tart; pert. 2. Stuck up; conceited; vain; scornful; supercilious. 3. Mean; stingy. 4. Finically smart.

**snob.** 1. A person who vulgarly affects gentility, or pretends to a superiority he does not possess; one who apes and cringes to his superiors



and is overbearing to those upon whom he looks as beneath him; one who regards wealth or position rather than character; a blatant, toad-eating vulgarian.

A tuft-hunter is a *snob*, a parasite is a *snob*, the man who allows the manhood within him to be awed by a coronet is a *snob*. The man who worships mere wealth is a *snob*.

TROLLOPE *W. M. Thackeray* p. 56

A vulgar man in England displays his character of *snob* by assuming as much as he can for himself, swaggering, and showing off in his dull, coarse way.

THACKERAY *Irish Sketchbook* 111

On being asked what a *snob* is, he said "An individual who would enjoy living in a dirty hole providing it had a fine frontage, and who is absolutely incapable of valuing moral or mental greatness unless it is first admired by big people."

*The Pall Mall Gazette* London, March 1, 1884

2. A cobbler. 3. A townsman as opposed to a gowmsman or member of a university. **snoop.** [U. S.] To pry into things that do not concern one; thrust one's nose into other people's affairs; also, to prowl or sneak around.

There was a play-actress thar, has been *snoopin'* round here twice since that young feller came.

BRET HARTE *Convalescence of Jack Hamlin*

**snooze.** Sleep

*Snooze* gently in thy arm-chair, thou easy baldhead. THACKERAY *Newcomes* xlix.

**snort.** [U. S.] To laugh with a noisy, boisterous, derisive outburst.

We all *snorted* and snickered.

Major Dowling's *Letters* 15.

**snorter.** [U. S.] A roaring gale; a heavy wind; anything of uncommon size or strength; a braggart or bully.

I am a roaring earthquake in a fight, a real *snorter* of the universe.

THORPE *Backwoods* 183

**snow.** In theatrical cant, persons admitted free to a performance; dead-heads.—**golden snow.** The yellowish pollen of forest fir-trees mixed with snow.—**snowball.** A plant, the guelder-rose.—**snowball system.** The endless chain system: an English term.—**snow blanket.** A protecting covering of snow.—**snow cap.** A humming-bird with the top of its head snow-white.—**snow-cock.** A partridge.—**snow-craft.** Expert knowledge of mountain climbing at great altitudes.—**snowdrop.** An early blooming bulbous plant with single white drooping flowers.—**snow-eater.** [Western U. S.] A wind that causes the snow to melt quickly.—**snowflake.** A bird, one of the finches. Called also **snow-bunting**.—**snow-glory.** An ornamental plant that flowers above the snows of its habitat.—**snow-limbed.** Having limbs as white as snow.—**snow-on-the-mountain.** A plant, the spurge, cultivated in the western United States for the white-edged leaves that surround its flowers.—**snow-snake.** A slender shaft, trimmed at one end, used to glide over ice or snow in a game played by American Indians.—**to snow under.** To defeat by an overwhelming majority, as a political candidate at an election.

**snub.** 1. To repress by a tart, sarcastic reply; check or rebuke. 2. To treat with studied neglect; slight deliberately; insult.

**snub-nose.** A short nose, slightly turned up at the end.

He has a *snub-nose*, and projecting eyes.

JOWETT *Plato* IV, 235.

**snuff** is used idiomatically in the following phrases.—**in snuff** or **in the snuff.** In a temper; angry.—**to go up in snuff,** to take snuff or take it in the snuff. To take offense, be offended, annoyed or cross at or be made indignant by.

I find they *go up in snuff* to bed without taking any manner of leave of them.

PEPYS *Diary*, Sept. 19, 1665

Englishmen, especially being young and inexperienced, are apt to take all things in snuff.

MORISON *Itinerary* III. 28

—**to snuff it.** To die.—**to snuff or take pepper in the nose.** To become violently angry; show bitter resentment.—**to snuff out.** To extinguish or put out by or as by snuffing; put an end to; silence, also, to die.

'Tis strange the mind, that fiery particle,

Should let itself be *snuff'd out* by an article

BYRON *Don Juan* xi, 60.

They will be *snuffed out*, nobody will listen to them before seven or after nine.

*The Daily Telegraph* London, Feb. 15, 1887,

—up to snuff. Knowing; well-informed; not easily deceived.

An up-to-snuff old vagabond.

DICKENS *Dombey* xxi.

so is used idiomatically in a number of phrases with varying significance.—

and so on. And the rest, or, and other things with the rest.—by so.

To the extent that; by that.—quite so. Just as said; precisely; exactly: used to

Signify assent.—so-and-so. 1. An imaginary or undetermined person; as, Dr. So-and-so. 2. An indefinite number of things 3. At the usual time

(2) If you persevere in your uncivil intention, I will do so and so.

SCOTT *Count Robert* xxix

(3) Divine service will be "performed" . . . at so-and-so o'clock.

RUSKIN *Crown of Wild Olive* 46.

—so as. 1. In such a manner or degree as; with such a result or purpose as; as, he shouted so as to be heard a mile away 2. If only; on condition that; as, he is willing to do any work, so as it is honorable —so called. Generally styled thus usually

implying a doubtful, questioned, or improper form —so far. 1. To that extent, degree, or point; as, so far you are right 2. As yet, as, I have not seen him so far —so

fashion. [U. S.] In that way; as, the knot should be tied so fashion —so long! Good-bye. —so much. Such a sum or quantity. —so much as. To whatever extent. —so so.

Neither very well nor very poorly, as, How are you getting along? Oh, so so —so that.

1. With the purpose or to the end that, as, we eat so that we may live 2. With the result that; as, she screamed so that she could be heard across the street. 3. If only;

on condition or provided that; as, he is indifferent to the means so that he accomplishes his purpose. —so then. The fact is thus, then, as a consequence, as, so then

you are going away. —so to say, so to speak. If one may say or speak thus; saying or speaking in these terms.

soak. 1. A hard drinker. 2. A pawnbroker's shop.—in soak. In pawn.

soap. 1. Flattery; oily gammon; venal praise. Usually soft soap. 2.

Money, especially when used for bribery.—how are you off for soap?

[Brit.] How are you off for money? Soap was formerly slang for money.

A young lady, looking at me very hard, said, "Well, Reefe, how are you off for soap?"

MARRYAT *Peter Simple* iv

—soap-box. The box used as a portable stand by a political orator or spellbinder at street-meetings. Hence, soap-box orator, soap-box oratory, eloquence, etc., a

person who uses a soap-box as a stump on which to stand when speaking, and the style of oratory or eloquence which flows at open-air meetings.—soap-boxer. One who is

hardened and habituated to soap-box methods —soap-bubble. A fair but unsubstantial show; a delusive project, speculation or scheme.

Theories are the mighty soap-bubbles with which the grown-up children of science amuse themselves.

WASHINGTON IRVING *Knickerbocker* 1, 50.

sob-sister. [U. S. Newspaper Cant.] A woman writer who devotes

herself to "human interest" stories, interviews with murderers, etc., as for the sensational press.

sob-stuff. [U. S. Newspaper Cant.] Written or printed matter in which

stress has been put on harrowing details for the purpose of appealing to the emotions.

soccer. Football as played under the rules of the Football Association of

Great Britain; a corruption of *Association*, plus -er, suffix of agency.

social. [U. S.] 1. An informal evening party, especially a social church-

meeting. Called also *social*.

She manages the book club and the church *social*.

T. W. HIGGINSON *Women and Men* 31.

2. An S-shaped chair in which two people can sit side by side but face opposite directions.

sockdolager. [U. S.] A finishing blow; conclusive argument; anything of

an overwhelming nature from a repartee to an earthquake.

The thunder would go rumbling and grumbling away, and quit—and then rip comes another flash and another *sockdolager*.

MARK TWAIN *Huckleberry Finn*.

**sod.** Turf; soil.—**the old sod.** One's native land.

**soda, ice-cream.** [U. S.] Soda-water with ice-cream in it: frequently contracted to *soda*.

**Sodom-apple.** See under APPLE OF SODOM.

**soft.** 1. Of weak intellect; foolish; simple. 2. Not intoxicating. 3. Easily affected; sympathetic; pitiful. 4. Effeminate: impressible; not firm. Hence, (1) Spoony, or maudlin in affection (2) Of weak intellect; foolish; simple.—**soft drink.** [U. S.] A non-alcoholic beverage —**soft-headed.** Somewhat weak in intellect; foolish; silly.—**soft-hearted.** Tender-hearted; yielding —**soft-sawder.** Cajolery; flattery; blarney; gammon

Sam Slick said he trusted to *soft-sawder* to get his wooden clocks into a house

HALLIBURTON *Human Nature* 311.

—**soft snap, thing or place.** See under SNAP —**soft-soap.** See under SOAP.

You don't catch me a slanderin' folks behind their backs, and then *soft-soapin'* them to their faces.

*Widow Bedott Papers* 308.

'Mrs Depew, you are the most sensible woman I've ever met.' 'None of your *soft-soap*, now.'

DELANNOY *Nineteen Thousand Pounds* XXXI.

—**the softer sex.** The female sex

That sex, which men call the *softer*, will dare the very devil, when occasion calls.

RITCHIE *Wanderings by Loire* 128.

—**to be soft on or upon.** To be in love with; regard with amorous affection.

I always thought she was rather *soft* on Jim

BOLDREWOOD *Robbery under Arms*.

**soil, to take.** To seek refuge; take shelter; get out of danger, as a hunted animal which, when hard pressed, resorts to water, a slough, or a marshy place.

**soldier.** I. *n.* [Brit.] A red-herring or a boiled lobster. II. *v.* 1. [U. S.] To loiter on one's job; to shirk. 2. [Australia.] To borrow a horse temporarily 3. [Eng.] To bully, hector —**old soldier.** 1. An empty bottle. 2. A cigar stump or that part of a cigar left unsmoked —**soldier of fortune.** A military man who serves where opportunity for service presents itself —**soldiers and sailors.** Beetles that prey on the larvæ of other insects

**solid.** 1. [U. S. Politics.] United; unanimous; as, the *Solid South*, meaning the States of the old Confederacy. 2. Firm and unyielding.—**to be solid for.** To be unanimously or firmly in favor of.

*I'm solid* for Mr. Peck every time

HOWELLS *Annie Kilburn* xviii.

—**to be solid with.** [U. S.] To be sure of the support of; have a certain definite understanding with.—**to make oneself solid.** [U. S.] To curry favor with; to be in agreement with.

**some.** [U. S.] I. *a.* Of considerable importance or account; noteworthy.

II. *adv.* Somewhat; a certain amount; considerably; a great deal.

Our lives in sleep are *some* like streams that glide

Twixt flesh an' sperrit boundin' on each side. LOWELL *Biglow Papers* 2d S. No. 6.

—**and then some.** [U. S.] To the extent or limit and beyond: an intensive.—**some of these days.** [U. S.] At an indefinite future time; sometime; before long.—**some pumpkins.** [Humorous, U. S.] Of considerable importance or of high grade or quality:

used of persons.

The Sheriff of Jackson is *some pumpkins* as a police officer, and a good fellow generally.

*Oregon Weekly Times* July 4, 1857.

**son.** A male offspring; hence, a man; a fellow: used in various idiomatic phrases.—**son of a sea-cook.** A term of banter applied by seamen to their shipmates.—**son of a gun.** [Humorous.] A rogue or rascal; a playful epithet originally applied to boys born afloat —**son or man of Belial.** One given over to depravity or lawlessness; a wicked evilly disposed person from *Belial*, the Hebrew per-

sonification of recklessness or lawlessness; the devil: used by Milton as the name of one of the fallen angels.

Cruel men, *sons of Belial* . . . imbrue their hands in the blood of thine Anointed,  
Book of Common Prayer

A scoffer, a debauched person, and in brief, a *man of Belial* SCOTT *Monastery* xxxiv  
—**son of Mars.** A soldier: from Mars, the God of War —**son of Neptune.** A sea-  
man who has crossed the equator. from Neptune, the Roman god of the sea Hence,  
any sailor

After once crossing the line, you can never be subjected to the process, but are  
considered as a *son of Neptune* R. H. DANA *Two Years Before the Mast*

**song.** A trifle; a matter of little consequence; as, the antique sold for a  
*song*.

You will perceive that we have obtained about 100,000 acres for a *song*  
PIKE *Sources of Mississippi* I  
Some care, some responsibility—that is a mere *song*, though  
MARION HARLAND *Alone* xxvi.

**sooner.** [U. S.] One who acts before the appointed time or who makes  
an unfair or premature move, as in taking up free public land, to secure  
an advantage of site.—**sooner or later.** At some unknown or unspecified time

**sop to Cerberus, throw a.** To pacify or quiet an opponent by some gift  
or favor: in allusion to the sop given to Cerberus by Æneas on entrance  
to Hades.

To Cerberus they give a *sop*

His triple barking mouth to stop

SWIFT *On Poetry*

**sophomore.** [U. S., University Cant.] A student of the second year,  
hence, **sophomoric**, inflated in style or manner, crude, immature,  
superficial. From *Soph-Mor*, the name of a junior sophister at Cam-  
bridge University, England: from Greek *sophos*, wise, and *moros*,  
foolish.

We now greet our friend as a *Sophomore* We trust he will add by his  
example no significance to that pithy word *sophomori*

WELLS AND DAVIS *Sketches of Williams College* 63

**sore.** 1. Pained or distressed in mind; susceptible of irritation; aggrieved,  
touchy; vexed; as, *sore at heart*; he is *sore* over his defeat. 2. Con-  
nected with or arousing painful feelings; irritating; aggravating; as, a  
*sore* theme for reflection. 3. Causing extreme distress; severe; afflic-  
tive; also, very great; extreme: always of something distressing; as, a  
*sore* calamity; he was in *sore* need. 4. Making sore; giving pain. 5.  
Vile; base; wretched. FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary*.

(1) Laugh at your friends, and, if your friends are *sore*,

So much the better, you may laugh the more

POPE *Epilogue Satires* I, 55

The public mind was so *sore* and excitable that their lies readily found credit

MACAULAY *History of England* II, 1, 233

**sorehead.** [U. S.] A dissatisfied, discontented or disgruntled person.

Some discontented magnate objects and threatens to withdraw If such a  
*sore-head* persists, a schism may follow.

BRYCE *American Commonwealth* III, LXIII, II, 458

**sorrow.** [Ir. & Sc.] The mischief, the deuce: frequently used as an impre-  
cation, and to imply an emphatic negative.—**sorrow on.** Plague on.

"Sorrow a know I know," said Leary.

CROKER *Fairy Legends of Ireland* I, 152

Sorrow on thee, and all the pack of you.

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act iv, sc. 3

—**the sorrow.** The devil; the fiend.

She should have been brunt, the auld limb o' the sorrow!

SERVICE *Life of Dr. Duguid* II, VII, 219.

**sort, after a.** In a certain way; to a certain degree; somehow.

**sort of.** To some extent or degree; in some way; in a manner resembling; somewhat: dialectally sometimes **sorter**.

It's a fine ewin but it's a *sort a* caad. MRS WHEELER *Westmoreland Dialect*.

The rosewood cradle had, in Stumpy's way of putting it "*sorter* killed" the rest of the furniture. BRET HARTE *Luck of Roaring Camp* II.

**sorts, of.** [Eng.] Rather poor; unsatisfactory.

While originally it meant "of different or various kinds," as, hats of *sorts*, offices of *sorts*, etc., it is now used disparagingly, and implies something of a kind that is not satisfactory, or of a character that is rather poor

FRANK H. VIZETELLY Intro to Kleiser's *Useful Phrases* p. 5

**so-so.** See under *so*.

So so is good, very good, very excellent good, and yet it is not; it is but *so-so*.

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act V, sc. 1

That illustrious lady, who, after leading but a *so-so* life, had died in the odour of sanctity. BARHAM *Inglodsbey Legends* 1, 73.

**so to speak.** See under *so*.

**sotto voce.** [It.] In an undertone or aside; in a low voice.

Then *sotto voce*, for we were very near, he sang again. C. KING *Sierra Nevada* X, 218

**soubrette.** [F.] An actress who plays or sings a bright, pert, or lively comedy part; originally, one who took the part of a pert, intriguing lady's-maid

**soulless corporation.** A heartless and unfeeling organization: a phrase based on British law.

They (*corporations*) cannot commit treason, nor be outlawed, nor excommunicated, because *they have no souls*. COKE *Reports* Vol. V *The Case of Sutton's Hospital*

Did you ever expect a *corporation* to have a conscience, when it has *no soul* to be damned and no body to kick? WILBERFORCE *Life of Thurlow* vol. II, Appendix

**sou marquee.** [U. S.] 1. A trifle. 2. An old French copper coin worth 15 deniers, but which, when defaced—marked or crossed—was worthless. From the French *sou marqué*.

[He said] I was not worth the tenth part of a *sou-marquee*, or ten scales of a red herring. R. M. BIRD *Robin Day* I, 29

**sound.** To approach, as a person, in order to seek information as to feelings, intentions, views, etc.; fathom.

I have *sounded* him already at a distance, and find all his answers exactly to our wish. GOLDSMITH *Good Natured Man* II.

**sound in folly, to.** To behave or seem to be foolish.

**soup.** [Brit.] 1. In lawyer's cant, briefs given to barristers for prosecutions at Quarter Sessions, or the fees attached to such briefs. 2. In thieves' cant: (1) Nitroglycerin, used by thieves to blow open safes or vaults. (2) Melted silverplate. 3. In racing cant, either a stimulant or a dope administered to a race-horse to affect its speed.

(1) But will *soup* so ladled out, to use the well known phrase, support a barrister in the criminal courts? *Law Times*, London xxvii, 122

(2) That's got enough *soup* in it to blow the whole courthouse sky-high. *Strand Magazine* XXX, 702

—**in soup and fish.** [U. S.] In full dress; in allusion to the courses at a formal dinner

—**in the soup.** [U. S. Slang] In a perplexing position; in trouble or difficulties

**sour grapes.** Something one pretends to despise or dislike because it is not attainable; in allusion to Æsop's fable of the Fox and the Grapes.

"Society is *sour grapes* to those beyond its pale," said Wemyss, "but those who can value it press from it the wine of life." F. J. STIMSON *First Harvests* 92.

**sour on.** 1. To become tired of; to turn away from, as in disgust. 2. To become bitter, morose, or harsh in disposition.

Dan *soured on* the Castlereagh boys at once.

*The Daily News* London, Nov. 13, 1900.

**souse.** I. *n.* 1. A dipping, plunging or drenching in water. 2. Hence, one who drinks to excess. 3. A swoop, as of a hawk on its prey; hence, a blow or thump; as, *souse* for *souse*, blow for blow. II. *v.* 1. To drench with or plunge into water; hence, bathe. 2. To soak in brine; to pickle. 3. To drink (oneself) into a state of intoxication.

**sow.** To scatter or spread, as seed; hence, to disseminate; as, to *sow* enmity; also, to dispense liberally, as to *sow* charity.—to **have hempseed sown for one.** To be doomed for the gallows.—to **sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.** To do or say anything that will bring severe punishment: from *Hosea* viii, 7.

**sow by the ear, to get, have, pull or take the right (or wrong).** To hit upon the right (or wrong) person or thing.

Those that happen to *have the wrong sow by the ear* will be very apt to curse the shortness of the vacation.

WARD *Merry Observations*.

In the proverbial phrase "*to pull the wrong sow by the ear*" (*Heywood's Proverbs* [1546]) the meaning is "to have taken hold of more than one can manage or to have tackled the wrong person."

**spade a spade, to call a.** To speak in plain terms; use frank speech.

I drink no wine at all, which so much improves our modern wits; a loose, plain, blunt, rude writer, I call a *spade a spade*; I respect matter, not words

BURTON *Anatomy of Melancholy* preface.

**spalpeen.** [Ir.] An itinerant harvester; hence, a roving rascal; scamp; a good-for-nothing.

The *spalpeen* turned into a buckeen that would be a squireen, but can't.

MARIA EDGEWORTH *Love and Law* I, iv.

**spank.** I. *n.* A smart, sounding blow with the open hand.

"You are sorry for your mother." . . . "I think so, but she *spanked* hard"

ROBINSON OWEN, *a Waif* I, 82.

II. *v.* To reprove by slapping; whip; beat; also, to urge forward by whipping; move speedily, trot; to ride or drive smartly.

The House of Lords *spanked* by 300 against 187.

Punch March 11, 1882.

A gentleman in a natty gig, with a high trotting horse, came *spanking* toward us

THACKERAY *Love* III.

**spanker.** 1. Any person or thing particularly striking in physical development or size; a magnificent specimen; a stunner; a beauty. 2. One who or that which proceeds rapidly. Hence: (1) One who walks with a long stride and unusually brisk step. (2) A fleet horse.

**spark.** 1. A person of cheerful disposition; a sprightly, mercurial character. 2. One who is fond of dress. 3. A woman given to gaities and frivolities of society. 4. A lover; gallant.—**sparkish.** Gallant; gay; jaunty; showy; fine; well-dressed.

**sparrowgrass.** Asparagus: a 17th century corruption, still in occasional or provincial use.

Brought with me from Fenchurch Street a hundred of *sparrow-grass*. PEPPYS *Diary*.

**spat.** I. *n.* 1. A petty quarrel; tiff; dispute. 2. A smart blow; slap.

(1) Robert and his uncle had a bit o' a *spat* this morning.

J. M. HENDERSON *Chron. Kartsdale* 316.

(2) The first sentence relating to Spain is a regular *spat* on the face to the villains of Verona.

CREEVEY in *C. Papers* II, 62.

**II. v. 1.** To engage in petty dispute. **2.** To fall, as rain, with a light sharp sound.

**spatch-cock.** [Brit. Military Cant.] To insert hurriedly; to sandwich.

I therefore *spatchcocked* into the middle of that telegram a sentence in which I suggested it would be necessary to surrender. **SIR R. BULLER** Speech, Oct. 11, 1901.

**speak** is used in varying senses in the following phrases: **ill or well spoken.** Addicted to speaking ill or well in any way; particularly, given to incorrect or to correct speech — **none or nothing to speak of.** Not any or nothing worth mentioning, not anything of importance — **not to be on speaking terms.** To be antagonistic or so estranged as to be unwilling to admit acquaintance. — **properly speaking.** Restricting oneself to the point and disregarding all other considerations — **so to speak.** See under **so** — **speak-easy** [U. S.] A place where liquor is sold contrary to law; especially, one that is not licensed. — **speaking acquaintance.** A person with whom one has the relations of only polite friendship; formal acquaintance. — **speaking terms.** Terms involving the exchange of formal courtesies — **speak of an angel and hear his wings.** Talk about some person and his presence will be noted. Also, sometimes rendered **talk of the devil and he's sure to appear.** — **speak softly and carry a big stick.** Talk low and be prepared for eventualities.

There is a homely adage which runs: "*Speak softly and carry a big stick*; you will go far." If the American nation will speak softly and yet build and keep at a pitch of the highest training a thoroughly efficient navy, the Monroe Doctrine will go far.

**THEODORE ROOSEVELT** Address at Minnesota State Fair, Sept. 2, 1901.

— **to speak behind one's back.** To malign or charge with wrong motives when one is not present — **to speak daggers.** To express passionate hatred. — **to speak fair.** To address in conciliatory or kindly terms — **to speak for.** 1. To be proof or evidence of, as, his close attention *speaks for* his interest. 2. To represent officially; argue or plead for, as a counsel *speaks for* his client. 3. To engage or to lay claim to; as, my brother *speaks for* Thursday. 4. To bark for; as, the dog *speaks for* the sugar. — **to speak in one's ear.** To whisper to one — **to speak of.** 1. To discuss; converse about. 2. To be worthy of discussion or to mention — **to speak to.** 1. To support, as a motion in debate. 2. To remonstrate with; admonish; reprove. 3. To testify to; attest. — **to speak up.** To speak out boldly; to raise the voice; to defend strongly.

Out he stepped to your father's side, and *spoke right up* before the King.

**KINGSLEY** *Hereward* I.

— **to speak well of.** To praise or speak favorably of.

Woe unto you, when all men shall *speak well of* you!

**LUKE** vi, 26.

**spear knows no brother, my.** Theodore Roosevelt's declaration of his political independence when preparing to lead the Progressive Party in the Presidential campaign which resulted in the election in 1912 of Woodrow Wilson for his first term as President in 1913, and in the defeat of Roosevelt and that of William Howard Taft, the Republican nominee.

**spear of Achilles.** A spear that could cure as well as wound, rust from it having cured Telephus, King of Mysia, after Achilles had wounded him.

Whose smile and frown, like to *Achilles' spear*  
Is able with the charge to kill or cure.

**SHAKESPEARE** *II Henry VI* act v, sc. 1.

**spear, sell under the.** To sell to the highest bidder: from the ancient Roman custom of planting a spear beside booty won in battle.

**special.** A newspaper issue printed in addition to the regular issue because of special news; an extra.

**spell. I. n. 1.** [U. S.] A turn of duty in relief of another. **2.** An indefinite period, as of time, weather, luck, temper, illness, etc.; as, a *spell* of wet

weather, of bad luck or ill temper, of poor health; a shift in work, watch at sea.

No, I haint, got a girl now. I had one a *spell*, but I'd rather do my own work.

C. D. WARNER *Pilgrimage* 145.

### 3. [Australia.] A relief or rest period.

Having a *spell*—what we should call a short holiday.

TROLLOPE *New Zealand and Australia* I, 84.

—to *spell* "able." To be equal to the performance of a task; have the ability to do.

—to *spell* backward. To misconstrue; take the wrong view or meaning of from the repeating of letters in reverse order —to *spell* "baker." To accomplish anything difficult, from the first spelling of dissyllables by a child.

**spellbinder.** [U. S.] A speaker who by his flow of oratory or magnetic influence holds audiences as if under a spell.

Party *spellbinders* are lustily disclaiming. *Evening Post* New York, Oct. 22, 1908

**spelling-bee.** A match or contest in spelling, frequently for prizes.

**spend.** 1. To part with; use up; squander; waste. 2. To exhaust or wear out with effort or use; be wasted or worn away.

I will very gladly *spend* and be *spent* for you.

2 *Corinthians* xii, 15.

3. To pass the time with, as, to *spend* the holidays with friends. 4. To discharge or emit, as salt, etc.—*spender*. One who pays out money for goods, needed or desired. Hence, a good *spender*, [U S] one who is lavish in expenditure. Contrasted with *piker*.

**Sphinx's riddle.** Any problem of great difficulty. The Sphinx was a mythical monster, with a woman's head and lion's body, that sat by the roadside of Thebes in Bœotia. See quotation.

At this time the *Sphinx* had appeared near Thebes, and would propound a *riddle* to all passers-by, devouring them when they could not solve it. The riddle ran as follows: "What is it that has only one voice, and goes first on four feet, then on two, and lastly on three?" (Edipus solved the riddle by replying that it was man, who crawls as an infant, walks on two feet in his prime, and supports himself on a stick in his old age. At this the Sphinx threw herself from a rock and perished.

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary* p. 1711.

**spick and span.** Brand new, just out of the bandbox, neat and trim.

An English clergyman came, *spick and span*,

In black and white—a large well favored man.

A H CLOUGH *Mari Magno* I, 34.

**spicy.** 1. Pungent; piquant; tart; sharp; full-flavored; racy.

A *spicy* bit of scandal.

LEVER *Rent in a Cloud* 58.

2. Showy; smart; stylish: of dress.

**spificate.** [Brit.] 1. To cause dread in; fill with apprehension; confound; fill with dismay. 2. To handle roughly; kill.

**spin.** 1. To move swiftly, as with whirling wheels; go quickly. 2. [Brit.] To reject after examination; plow; pluck.

Don't you funk being *spun*?

WHYTE MELVILLE *White Rose* I, ix

—*spin* a yarn. To relate a story: originally a nautical phrase.

The *yarn* is *spun* by Ben. Campion, the old salt who was its hero.

*The Observer* London, Dec. 20, 1885.

—to *spin* street-yarn. [New Eng.] To gad about retailing current gossip

**spindlelegs or spindleshanks.** One who has long thin legs; hence, a tall, slender person.

My master is a personable man, and not a *spindle-shanked* hoddody-doddy

SWIFT *Mary the Cookmaid's Letter*.



**spindrift.** Sea spray; spoodrift.—**spindrift clouds.** Light feathery clouds.

Think of the creaking deck-beams,  
Of the ports with *spindrift* white;  
Of the rowers chained to the benches  
At their labor, day and night.

FRANCIS H. MEDHURST *To F. H. V.*, April 2, 1912.

**spirit.** The principal of life and vital energy.—**in or out of spirits.**

Cheerfully or uncheerfully disposed, happy or unhappy.

I suppose he is quite *in spirits* at your success.

DISRAELI *Vivian Grey* IV, ii.

So *out of spirits* that she is cruelly afraid she shall never live until her dear master's return.

JESSE SELWYN *and Contemporaries* IV, 259.

**Spirit, the.** 1. The Supreme Being. 2. The Holy Ghost.—**spirit of**

**sense.** The essence of sensibility: a vital or life-giving principle transformed in the brain into the subtle agency of sensation.—**spirit-rapper.** A medium who professes to obtain communications by rapping.—**spirit-rapping.** The alleged communication with departed spirits by means of raps or knocks, as on a table.

**spit.** [Brit.] I. *n.* Image; likeness. II. *v.* To show signs of rain; to sprinkle.

And, putting her hand out of the window [she said] "I think it's *spitting* already."

MISS FERRIER *Marriage* VII.

—**spit-curl.** A curl made to lie flat, as with saliva, soap curl, an aggravator —**spit-fire.** A thing which spits or vomits fire, as a cannon, hence, an irascible, passionate, quick-tempered person.

Vesuvius is the most renowned of accessible *spit-fires*. F. TROLLOPE *V. Italy* II, 199.

What a little *spitfire* was this Nancy of mine.

BESANT AND RICE *Chapt. of Fleet* II, iv.

—**to spit at, on, or upon.** To treat with contempt; insult grossly.—**to spit out.** [Brit.] To speak plainly, to speak a language.

A good saying well *spit out* is a Christmas fire to my withered heart.

T. HARDY *Ethelberta* V.

No Sir, speak up. . . . Don't be afraid, *spit it out*.

A. GRIFFITH *Fifty Years Public Service* II.

**spite of or in spite of.** Notwithstanding: formerly, in contempt of.

**splash.** [Brit.] Display, effort, exertion; hence, **splash up**, in dashing style and quick time.

—**to make a splash.** To make a display; cut a dash.

I've got a loan of a big hall, . . . and I intend to *make a bit of a splash*.

KERNAHAN *Scoundrels* XV.

**spliced, to be or get.** To be or to get married.

Alfred and I intended to be married in this way almost from the first; we never meant to be *spliced* in the humdrum way of other people.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË *Villette* XLII.

**splice the main brace.** [Naut.] To take a glass of grog; hence, to drink freely.

Mr Falcon, *splice the main-brace* and call the watch. MARRYAT *Peter Simple* XV.

**split.** I. *n.* 1. A halfpint bottle of wine or other drink. 2. A half, as of a bottle of soda-water. 3. An acrobatic trick in which the legs are extended laterally on the floor. 4. Any condition resembling a break, crack, fissure or rent; as a *split* in a political party. 5. Noisy blare. II. *v.* 1. To betray the secrets of another; inform against an accomplice. 2. To burst with, as in an effort to suppress laughter. 3. To walk or run rapidly —**splitting.** 1. Very rapid, extremely fast. 2. Violent, severe. 3. Deafening.

(1) Racing off at a *splitting* pace for the workhouse.

DICKENS *Mutual Friend* III, xv.

(2) I had a *splitting* headache in consequence of my fall.

EARL DUNMORE *Pamira* II, 191.

(3) Worse than the rabble's shout, or *splitting* trumpet. BYRON *Sardanapalus* I, 11  
—**split up**. [Brit.] A lanky fellow: from one who can do the split. See **SPLIT**, n. 3  
—**to split a bottle**. [Brit.] To share, as a bottle of wine or soda-water —**to split a ticket**. [U. S.] To divide (a ballot) between candidates of opposing parties. —**to split on**. To peach on, betray, give information against. See **SPLIT**, v.  
If anybody is to *split*, I had better be the person.

DICKENS *Old Curiosity Shop* LXVI.  
—**to split on a rock**. To come upon unforeseen obstacles; encounter disastrous difficulties; go to ruin —**to split one's sides**. To laugh noisily. See **SPLIT**, v.  
Seeing us ready to *split our sides*, laughing at nothing.

COLLEY CIBBER *Careless Husband* III.  
—**to split the difference**. To take the mean, divide equally the amount or the matter in dispute —**to split up**. [U. S.] To divide, as money paid for protection —**to split with**. To quarrel or break with a person.

I don't want to *split with* Pharold

JAMES GIPSY XI.

**spurge**. [U. S.] I. n. Display; vain show; sensation; fuss.

They make a great deal of ostentatious *spurge*; and many of them come to no result at last.

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER *Summer in Garden* 152.

II. v. To make a vain display; cut a dash; make a sensation.

**spoil for, to**. To long or crave for.

The native population . . . chronically *spoiling for a fight*

STEVENSON *Letters* II, 191.

**spoils**. [U. S.] Party patronage; the division of offices among the faithful after a new State, Federal, or Municipal administration takes hold.

Leave these to parties contending for office as the "*spoils of victory*"

WHITTIER *What Is Slavery?* Works III, 107.

The post of policeman is *spoils* of the humbler order, but *spoils* equally divided between the parties.

BYRCE *American Commonwealth* II, 271

**spoilsman**. [U. S.] One who obtains or seeks his share of party spoils.

The *spoilsman* that would sell his country for a mess of pottage

T. B. BENTON *Thirty Years* II, 784.

**spoils system**. [U. S.] The filling of political offices by a new administration with its own supporters. A phrase first used in the United States Senate by William S. Marcy of New York in 1832.

**spoil the Egyptians**. To obtain supplies from one's enemies; to trick or swindle an alien people.

And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they (the Israelites) *spoiled the Egyptians*.

Exodus xii, 36

**spoke in one's wheel, to put a**. To arrest one's progress; to thwart one's plans or purposes.

**spondulix**. [U. S.] Money.

As long as the Cubans can raise the *spondulix*, they'll get plenty of people to fit out expeditions for them.

J. H. BLOOMFIELD *Cuban Exped* 20.

**sponge**. I. A hard drinker; a drunkard.

I'll do anything, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a *sponge*.

SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice* act i, sc. 2.

2. One who lives at the expense of another; a parasite.

Where excessive wealth flows into the graceless and injurious hands of common *sponges*.

MILTON *Reformation in England* II.

**sponge on or upon**. To obtain money, food, or advantages by playing the toady, parasite, or sycophant.

They will cheat the public at their shops or *sponge on* their friends at their houses.

RUSKIN *Pol. Econ. Art.* 198.

**spoof**. [Brit.] I. n. A deception or swindle; a hoax. Also a joke. II.

v. To humbug; hoax; impose upon; play a practical joke on.

**spook.** [Dutch.] A ghost; specter; apparition: a word adopted from the Pennsylvania Dutch, now spread over the English-speaking world.

I am haunted by a *spook* with oblique eyes and a pig-tail.

STEPHENS *Black Gin*, etc. ii.

—to see **spooks**. To be disconcerted or alarmed, as if by seeing ghosts.

**spoon!**, by the great horn-. See under HORN-SPOON.

**spoon or spoil a horn**, to make a. To undertake something in which failure means certain loss.

I aye said he was ane o' them wod make a *spune* or *spoil* a horn.

SCOTT *Rob Roy* XXII.

**spoons on or spoony on**, to be. To be in love with.

A girl would rather make her way out by herself than with a fellow she's *spoons* on

HAWLEY SMART *Struck Down* XI

**spoony**. Soft and foolish; sentimentally amorous; foolish, fond.

Not a *spooney* love-lorn effusion, but a good rational, amusing letter

B. M. CROKER *Proper Pride* I. v, 85.

**sport. n.** [Brit.] 1. A person of cheap flashy appearance. 2. One who is ready to join others in an enterprise of any sort; particularly, one who is willing to pay his share, as for entertainment. 3. One who follows outdoor games for gain, a gambler or gamester. 4. A person given up to fads; a crank. 5. A play or theatrical performance

The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,

Who Piramus presented, in their *sport*,

Forsooke his scene

SHAKESPEARE *Midsummer Night's Dream* act iii, sc. 2

6. Amorous dalliance or diversion, wanton play. SHAKESPEARE *Othello* act ii, sc. 1

7. A jest or joke something causing merriment, anything that causes diversion or mirth; also, merriment; pleasantry, rally. 8. Empty; meaningless jingle. 9.

A plant that varies from the parent stock, as a four-, five- or six-leaved clover.—in

**sport**. By way of jest, in fun, not earnestly

Love no man in good earnest, nor

No further in *sport* neyther

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act i, sc. 2.

—to make **sport**. To provide amusement, cause merriment or diversion.

That little Yankee girl had really made good sport all the way home

MRS HUMPHRY WARD *Daphne* II, 47.

—to make **sport of**. To jest about, poke fun at, cause to be the butt of one's jokes or jests: formerly, to make a sport of.

He would but make a *sport* of it, and torment the poor lady worse.

SHAKESPEARE *Much Ado About Nothing* act ii, sc. 3.

**sport. v.** 1. To amuse oneself.

Advice is *sporting* while infection breeds.

SHAKESPEARE *Lucrece* 907.

2. To take pleasure in, or spend one's time with.

The ministers of state *sported* themselves in the most wanton acts of arbitrary power.

NEAL *History of the Puritans* II, 200

So language . . . too often . . . proves a toy to sport with and pass time away.

COWPER *Conversation* 18.

3. To toy or play with; frolic or gambol in open air

Her beams . . . part with her cheek, part with her lips did *sport*.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING *Poems* 24.

The wind *sported* with her gown. HAWTHORNE *American Note-Book* II, 101.

4. To exhibit, display, or wear in public: usually implying a degree of ostentatious show.

A country gentleman, *sporting* the orthodox blue coat . . . and top-boots.

HENRY VIZETELLY *Glances Back Through Seventy Years* I, i, 6.

5. To keep for use; set up; go in for; carry; as to sport a pipe or a cane; he sports a motor-car.

**sporty**. Gay; showy; loud; also, dissipated.

**sposh.** [U. S.] Slush or mud; also, half-melted snow or partly frozen water.

Yellow *sposh* and mud and water everywhere. BURROUGHS *Birds and Poets* 109.

**spot.** 1. A stigma or blot; blemish or stain on the moral character. 2. [Brokers' Cant.] Commodities sold for spot cash; hence, cash payment. 3. A dollar: usually with a numeral prefix as a *five-spot* (a five-dollar bill) — **a soft spot.** See under **soft** — **on the spot.** At once, without moving from a place — **spot market.** A market for delivery cash down, and not for futures — **to knock the spots off or out of.** 1. To beat or thrash thoroughly 2. To excel; surpass

The breezes blowing . . . in a way which *knocked spots out of* the fragrance of the hayfields  
The Pall Mall Gazette London, Feb 5, 1888

**spout.** 1. *n.* 1. A shoot or lift, especially one in a pawnbroker's shop; hence, the shop itself. 2. A tube for the discharge of a liquid. II. *v.* 1. To speak voluminously or to recite or declaim in a pompous or grandiloquent manner.

In the garret is a *spouting* author

REYNOLDS *Fortune's Fool* IV, 1.

2. To flow freely or gush forth; pour out, as a liquid.

**spout, up the.** [Brit.] Pledged, pawned; and by extension out of control; in a hopeless or bad way.

I haven't a suit of clothes fit to go in; even my wig and gown are *up the spout* together.  
D C MURRAY *Cynic Fortune* VII.

The fact is, Germany is *up the spout*, and consequently a damper is thrown over my hopes for next summer

DODS *Early Letters* 35.

**sprat to catch a herring, mackerel or whale, throw or give a.** See under **HERRING.**

"Did you never hear of the man that *flung away a sprat to catch a whale*?"

C READE *Never Too Late to Mend* LIX.

*Give a Sprat to catch a Mackerel.*

Notes and Queries Series VI, 495 (1864)

**spread.** A meal set out or spread on a table, usually in an elaborate manner.

Next day I was present at a *spread* at the Mission Hall of a much more gratifying description  
GREENWOOD *In Strange Company*

**spread-eagle.** *v.* 1. To lash to the mast with limbs outspread for punishment: a former disciplinary practise at sea. 2. To scatter or disperse over a field, as horses in a race — **spread-eagleism.** [U S] A tendency to grandiloquence or bombast in lauding the United States or in presenting a subject that bears on its political relations with the community at large, an exaggerated style of diction, fustian; highfalutin

**spread oneself.** [U. S.] To make a display of something done or owned by oneself; also, to brag, boast, or swagger.

At school, on great occasions before company, the Superintendent . . . had always made this boy come out and *spread himself*

MARK TWAIN *Tom Sawyer* 46

**spree.** A boisterous or gay frolic; a drunken carousal.

*Spree*, innocent merriment.

JAMIESON *Scottish Dict.*

Gentlemen rankers out on the *spree*

Damned from here to eternity

KIPLING *Barrack-Room Ballads.*

**sprig.** [Brit.] A stripling; a young man of fashion; any well-groomed youngster; a dude; a dandy.

A *sprig* of the nobility that has a spirit equal to his fortunes.

SHIRLEY *Hyde Park* act i, sc 1

**spring a leak.** To spring open or crack so as to let in water; hence, to give way or break through overstrain.

His talent has *sprung* the greater leak.

BUTLER *Remains* I, 206.

**spring upon.** To produce suddenly, as an announcement; a piece of news, a surprize, a resignation, etc.

She was one of those women who rule their daughters by *springing* surprises on them  
MERRIMAN *Sowers* xxvii

**sprung.** Slightly drunk; tipsy.

He reckoned they were a little bit *sprung*

MRS. STOWE *Dred* I, 87

**spunk.** Spirit; courage; mettle; pluck; also, daring, boldness, audacity; hence, **spunkie** or **spunky**, a spirited courageous fellow; also, an irritable hot-tempered person.

Neither of them wanting *spunk*, at it they went

W. CLARK RUSSELL *My Shipmate Louse* I, x, 213

He was himself a perfect *spunkie* of passion

GALT *Annals of the Parish* xxvi

**spur.** That which incites or urges; an incentive.—**on the spur of the moment** or **occasion.** Without deliberation; extemporaneously, unpremeditatedly, impromptu

There's nothing like acting *on the spur of the moment*

JOHN STRANGE WINTER *Lumley* X

—**to dish up the spurs.** To indicate that one's provisions or resources are exhausted from the Scottish practise of feudal times and border raids when the serving of a pair of spurs as the last course was token that there was no more food in the house and that the time had come to don spurs, mount the horses and go on a cattle-raid.

He *dishes up the spurs* in his helpless address, like one of the old Border chiefs with an empty larder.

*The Daily Telegraph* London 1893

—**to earn or win one's spurs.** To attain the rank of knighthood from the practise of presenting a pair of gilt spurs to one who has been created a knight Hence, to gain honor, acquire distinction or reputation

The painter executed his task with a patience . . . worthy of one who had to *win his spurs*

THORNBURY *Turner* I, 390

**squab.** 1. A fat and usually short person; by extension, a woman without regard to age.

A great fat *squab* like Lucy.

BARTRAM *People of Clapton* 201

2. A well-rounded chubby young girl. 3. A fledgeling; hence, an inexperienced person of either sex.

**squalls, to look out for.** To be alert for trouble or on guard against threatening storms; be ready to face difficulties.

If this be the case let the ministry *look out for squalls*

*The Daily Telegraph* London, July 6, 1894

**square.** To pay tribute to, as the price of peace or protection. hence, to bribe or pay money to under intimidation.—**all square.** [Brit.]

! In a seemly or becoming manner, with due care for the proprieties, fitly, properly

Here they were married, *all square* and regular, by the Scotch clergyman

R. BOLDEWOOD *Robbery under Arms* XXVIII

—**old square-toes.** A punctilious, old-fashioned person; one who is formal or precise to excess.

I could hardly keep my gravity on this ludicrous occasion, but *old square-toes* was differently affected.

SMOLLETT *Humphrey Clinker* 164

—**on the square.** Fair in one's dealings; honest and upright, also, without dissimulation; openly.

Scarce one woman in a hundred will play with you *on the square*.

NEWCASTLE AND DRYDEN *Sir Martin Mar-all* act i, sc 1

He is awkward, and out of place, in the society of his equals . . . He cannot meet you *on the square*.

LAMB *Essays of Elia* 1.

—**square deal.** [U S] A bargain or transaction characterized by fairness and honesty; any negotiation conducted in accordance with ordinary justice —**square-face.**

[Brit.] Holland gin. from the square bottle in which it is sold —**square-head.** 1. A

Dutch, German, or Scandinavian immigrant. **2.** [Brit. Thieves' Cant] An honest man.—**square meal.** A substantial repast; a full, satisfying meal.

Talleyrand, even at the age of eighty, ate but one *square meal* a day

*Saturday Review* 1888

—**to call it square.** To consider a claim or debt settled; to make no further demand  
—**to get square with.** To be avenged upon; get even with.—**to square accounts or matters.** To pay in full, settle an account; adjust differences.

He left the land of his adoption before he had properly *squared accounts* with King Francis

SYMONDS *Life of Benvenuto Cellini* I, Intro., p. xlvii.

—**to square the circle.** To achieve the impossible.—**to square the shoulders.** To raise one's shoulders to a horizontal line in sign of contempt, derision, helplessness or disgust.—**to square (something) to or with.** To adjust so as to agree with; reconcile, as one's views or purposes with those of another; agree.

Of all things in the world, that is the very thing where your views and mine happen *to square.*

CUPPLES *Green Hand* XIII.

—**to square up.** To pay in full, as an account; settle; balance.—**to square up to.** To assume an attitude of belligerence toward, from the position taken by a boxer at the beginning of an encounter

**squatter.** 1. One who settles on government land under lease or without right. Hence, **squattage**, a squatter's station; **squattocracy**, **squatterdom**, etc., the squatter class as owners of great tracts of pastoral land. **2.** [Australia.] A tenant of the Commonwealth.

*Squatter* was applied in the first instance to signify, as in America, such as erected huts on unsold land. It thus came to be applied to all who did not live on their own land, to whom the original and more expressive name of settler continued to be applied

CAMPBELL-PRED *Head Station* 35

**squatter sovereignty.** [U. S.] Popular sovereignty: a phrase applied by its opponents to Stephen A. Douglas's doctrine that the Territories should settle the slavery question by their own laws.

I do not hold that *squatter sovereignty* is superior to the Constitution

MR. DOUGLAS of Illinois, Speech in the United States Senate, Feb. 23, 1859.

**squeak.** A hairbreadth; the very least amount.—**by a narrow or near squeak.** By the least possible margin.

**squeal.** To betray a plot or an accomplice; to inform.

If they *squeal*, as the tramp says, they are sure to be rewarded

FLYNT *Tramps* 128.

**squeeze.** I. *n.* A crowd or party, as of friends. II. *v.* To compel to pay tribute to; coerce; extort.

The little officers oppress the people; the great officers *squeeze* them

PEACOCKE *Descript. of the Past* I, 171

—**a tight squeeze.** A position from which it is difficult to extricate oneself

**squireen.** [Ir.] 1. A petty squire or one owning land in a small way.

2. The son of a squire: used usually in contempt.

**squirm.** To escape by awkward evasion; wriggle out of like a snake.

He should press his foot hard down upon the old serpent, feeling him *squirm* mightily.

HAWTHORNE *Transformation* (1878), 156

**squirt.** 1. A brainless conceited person; a puppy; an upstart; contemptible person.

What do I care for a little *squirt* like thee?

S. *Cheshire Glossary*

2. A piece of fine writing which approaches highfalutin.

That sounds like what we college boys used to call a "*squirt*"

HOLMES *Poel at the Breakfast Table* IX.

**stab at, to make a.** [U. S.] To attempt to do something.

**stab in the back.** To harm, traduce, or speak evil of one who is not present.

**'stab, on the.** [Brit. Printers' Cant.] On the payroll of the establishment; not paid by piece: a contraction of *establishment*.

**staff of life.** Bread, or any other staple food.

"Bread," says he, "dear brothers, is the *staff of life*."

Broad beans form one of the *staves of life* in Sicily.

SWIFT *Tale of a Tub* sect. 4.

SLADEN *In Sicily* I, 372.

**staff, to have the better, or worse end of the.** To profit or lose by a transaction.

Miss Byron, *I have had the better end of the staff*, I believe?

RICHARDSON *Grandison* II, 122

**stag.** [U. S.] A man, especially when not in the company of women; used in combination to designate a function attended by men only; as, a *stag-dinner*, a *stag-party*. Compare HEN-PARTY.

**stage, the.** The theatrical profession in general; specifically, the calling of an actor or actress.—**stage-fever.** Infatuation for the stage as a means of livelihood, a strong desire to become an actor or actress.—**stage-struck.** Infatuated with the stage

The false tones and exaggerated gesture of the *stage-struck* pirate

SCOTT *Pirate* XXXIX.

—**stage whisper.** A loud whisper, such as uttered on the stage for the benefit of the audience; something said with the intention that others shall hear it.

**stager, an old.** [Brit.] A person of long experience in anything.

Here let me, as an *old stager* on the theatre of the world, suggest one consideration to

you

CHESTERFIELD *Letters* Dec, 20, 1748.

**stake, at.** At risk; in peril of a hazard.

He may be fairly appealed to when the honour of his master is *at stake*

JOWETT *Plato* IV, 227.

**stakes and rice fence.** [Brit.] A wattled fence or hurdle.

Giving his horse a good dig with his spurs, he lifted him over a stiff *stakes*; and *rice fence*.

SURTEES *Ask Mamma* LXV, 295.

**stall.** 1. *v.* 1. To be evasive or to fence in argument. 2. To postpone payment, as of a debt. 3. To stick fast in mud or snow. 4. By extension (1) To delay; put off; postpone; avoid (2) To make a show of effort, as in a race, while saving oneself for some other event II. *n.* A pickpocket's confederate; hence, **Stalling ken**, a place for receiving stolen goods: police cant—to **stall off**. To prevent or ward off.

His very preface should have *stalled off* denunciations of this kind

*The Athenæum* London, Oct. 7, 1905.

**Stalwart.** [U. S.] An unwavering supporter. Specifically, one of Grant's or Conkling's followers in the Republican party (1880-1881).

**stampede.** [U. S.] A sudden impulsive tumultuous movement of a crowd of persons, body of troops or herd of cattle: derived from the Spanish *estampido*, crash, and applied to the rout of a panic-stricken army; the defeat of a party, etc.

A *stampede* sometimes seizes the herd, and then with upturned head and glaring eyes, the animals rush along, making the earth tremble under their feet

THORPE *Mysteries of the Backwoods* 15.

They thought they could *stampede* us, but we belonged to the Army of the Potomac.

*Harper's Weekly* Oct. 8, 1864.

**stand.** *n.* 1. [U. S.] A place to do business, as a news-stand. 2. [Theatrical Cant.] An engagement, as of a touring company, to play one night in one place.

**stand.** *v.* 1. To bear the expense of. 2. [Eng.] To offer oneself as a candidate for election to Parliament.

—to **stand a chance or show.** To have an opportunity to gain some advantage.

—to **stand by.** To support firmly; adhere to; abide by—to **stand corrected.**

To acknowledge an error or accept a correction.—to **stand fast.** To be unshaken; be fixed or determined.—to **stand fire.** 1. To face the firing of an enemy without

finching; remain steady under fire 2. To be uninjured by exposure to heat or the excessive heat of a furnace, as earthenware utensils — **to stand in**. 1. To join in a venture or speculation

The policeman who "*stood in*" for this robbery saw the thieves depart with their plunder. MAYHEW *Paved with Gold* III, XX.

2. To have a friendly or profitable understanding with 3. To cost; as, the outfit *stood me in* five hundred dollars — **to stand in good stead**. To be of advantage to. — **to stand in need of**. To be in want of, to require as a necessity, as, *to stand in need of a bath* — **to stand off**. 1. To hold aloof; to be distant, reserved 2. To keep at or as at a distance

I entreated him *to stand off*, telling him fairly how deeply I was compromised

— **to stand one in stead**. To be serviceable or convenient to one — **to stand one's ground**. To hold to one's position firmly; maintain stoutly — **to stand on one's own feet or legs**. To act independently, manage one's own affairs — **to stand on points**. To insist on the observance of forms and ceremony, be punctilious.

This fellow doth not *stand upon points*

SHAKESPEARE *Midsummer Night's Dream* act v, sc. 1.  
— **to stand out**. 1. To withhold agreement, refuse consent to 2. To bear to the end without giving way 3. To be prominent; also, to appear in relief — **to stand over**. To be postponed, to be set aside or delayed for the time — **to stand pat**. [U S] To adhere firmly to the policy of a political party in power from the practise, in poker, of signifying one's intention to play one hand as dealt Hence, **standpatter**, one who adopts this policy — **to stand Sam**. [Brit.] To stand treat

I must insist upon *standing Sam* on this occasion AINSWORTH *Rookwood* IV, ii  
— **to stand to**. 1. To adhere to, abide by, maintain, uphold

No wise prince will ever refuse *to stand to* a lawful contract

BLACKSTONE *Comment*, I 243.

2. To fall to; take hold; carry on, continue; persevere

The peasants *stood to* it like men

DOYLE *Micah Clarke* XIV, 144.

3. To face in fight; oppose, as in a duel — **to stand to one's colors or guns**. 1. To adhere to a statement, or persist in a course of action, etc 2. To fight in defense of one's flag or guns to the last; resist to the end

They *stood to their guns* till the powder was all gone Longmans' *Magazine* Oct., 1891.  
— **to stand to reason**. To be reasonably certain or naturally or obviously sure

It *stands to reason* that a young man's work cannot be perfect

RUSKIN *Political Economy of Art* I

— **to stand up for**. To defend; assist; maintain, champion

His subjects *stood up for* their liberties

COLEMAN *Hopes Deferred* 30

— **to stand upon**. To insist on vigorously; as, he *stands on his rights* — **to stand up to**. To face courageously, meet faithfully, keep or fulfil, as promises

**standing orders**. Regulations by a court or legislative body for the conduct of its proceedings that are operative until specially rescinded.

Both houses have agreed, at various times, to *standing orders*, for the permanent guidance and order of their proceedings

MAY *Parliament* II, vii, 131

**star**. I. n. 1. One who plays a leading part or interprets the principal role in a play, an opera, a motion picture, etc. 2. A person who shines brilliantly in a calling or profession; as, a literary or political **star**. II. v. 1. To play a leading part, as in a play, opera, motion picture. 2. Hence, to take the lead in anything; be the chief attraction.

(1) Booth had been *starring* it as his (Edmund Kean's) rival at Covent Garden CHARLES AND MARY C. CLARKE *Recollections* 15

(2) I have been "*starring*" at the Mansion House.

HUXLEY in L. HUXLEY's *Life* II, 151.

— **his star is in the ascendant**. Fortune favors him; he is lucky: in allusion to the supposed influence of the stars on the life and fortune of persons born when the stars are above the horizon.

In astrology, . . . when those *stars are in the ascendant* he is strong, healthy, and lucky. but when they are depressed . . . he is in the shade and subject to ill-fortune.

BREWER *Phrase and Fable* p. 1175.

— **star-boarder**. [U. S.] A favored boarder.



**starched, starchy.** 1. Proud; affected; stuck up. 2. Formal; precise; exact.

Much modern English that is strictly grammatical is *starched* English; so stiff that it has lost . . . that plasticity which makes our language one of the easiest into which to mold thought.

Nothing like these *starchy* doctors for vanity

FRANK H. VIZETELLY *Mend Your Speech* p. 8

GEORGE ELIOT *Middlemarch* xxii.

**starch out of, to take the.** To reduce to a state of humility; take the spirit out of; also, to remove the stiffness or formality of.

**stare one in the face.** To be unpleasantly near or apparent; to threaten; to be forced to notice.

When he knew himself insolvent, and when ruin and bankruptcy were *staring him in the face*

ELLENBOROUGH in Maule and Selwyn's *Reports* VI, 316

**Stars and Bars.** The flag of the Confederate States of America.

**Stars and Stripes.** The flag of the United States of America which has as many stripes as the original number of States (13 alternate red and white) and as many stars as States (48 in all).

**start in or up.** [U. S.] To set to work; begin; get into action.

**State's evidence.** 1. A person who confesses his own crime and proffers himself as a witness against his accomplices. 2. Evidence produced by a State in a criminal prosecution. Compare KING'S EVIDENCE.

**station.** 1. An assigned post or location; also, a starting- or stopping-place as on a railroad. Specifically, the headquarters of some official branch of a government. 2. [Austral.] A sheep or cattle ranch; hence, any ranch.

**stave off.** To ward off as with a staff; arrest the movement, performance, or execution of; defer by some interposition; drive away; usually with *off*.

A little fish sufficed to *stave off* hunger

DIXON *Windsor* III, 231

This *staved* the fellows *off* for a while

HAGGARD *Jess* xxxiv

**stayer.** One having staying-power, endurance, strength.

Workman was certainly a horse to inspire confidence, being well-shaped, and built like a *stayer*.

GOULD *Landed at Last* IV

**stay put.** [U. S.] To remain placed; stand pat.

We piled our bags and baskets . . . If they will only *stay put*, said Emery Ann.

WHITNEY *Sights and Insights* 31

**stays, in.** In the act of going about, as on another tack: said of a sailing vessel.

**steal a march.** To march secretly to an enemy's disadvantage; hence, to gain an advantage by unexpected movements.

He *stole a march* on his nurses, and . . . walked out and tottered into the jail

READE *Never too Late to Mend* XXII

**steam-roller.** [U. S.] A machine for crushing obstacles by flattening them. Specifically, in politics, the methods employed to overcome opposition, as to a ticket or platform approved by the bosses

[The term] was first heard of in June, 1908, when it was applied by Oswald F. Schuette to the methods employed by the Roosevelt-Taft majority in the Republican National Committee in overriding the protests against seating the Taft delegates from Arkansas

H. L. MENCKEN *The American Language* 307

**steep.** Exorbitant; excessive: used as a general intensive, as *steep* prices, high prices; *steep* undertaking, a difficult undertaking; too *steep*, too high, too silly, too impudent, etc. Also, marked; material.

Neither priest nor squire was able to establish any *steep* difference in advantages between himself and the commons among whom he lived. FROUDE *Sketches* 164.

**steerer.** [U. S.] One who lures and guides dupes to another who fleeces them of their money.

A *steerer* is the go-between of the shyster and prisoner; by wile and guile he brings clients to the lawyer, and in return gets a liberal reward.

*The Evening Post* New York, Jan. 10, 1910.

**steering committee.** [U. S.] A committee in charge of a political campaign or election. In modern speech replaced by *executive committee*.

**stew.** Mental disturbance; fuss, worry: used frequently in the phrase in a *stew*, to be greatly worried or distressed.

**stewed.** Intoxicated.

**stew or fry in one's own grease or juice.** To suffer as the victim of one's own folly: frequently mistaken for a modernism owing to its use by Bismarck during the siege of Paris by the Germans in 1870-71.

But certainly I made folk such chere,

That in his own grees I made him fre

CHAUCER *Canterbury Tales*, *The Wife of Bath's Preamble*

**stick.** I. *n.* 1. An ingredient of alcohol in an otherwise non-alcoholic drink. 2. A stiff, inactive stupid person. II. *v.* 1. To defraud; cheat; swindle.

Has he (a horse dealer) ever *stuck* you with a wrong one?

M. H. HAYES *Among Horses in Russia* Introd. 19.

2. To perplex; puzzle; check —to **stick at**. To be scrupulous about; to hesitate to accept or believe. Used sometimes in the phrase **to stick at nothing**, to let nothing impede or stand in the way of

Who, as she had too much reason to think, would *stick at nothing* to gain his Ends

RICHARDSON *Pamela* III, 328.

—to **stick by**. To cling faithfully to, abide with.

But Swift had this merit of a faithful partisan, that he *stuck by* Harley bravely after his fall

THACKERAY *Esmond* III, x.

—to **stick in**. To remain in control; stay in obstinately; to persevere.

So we should see old Brownsides and his Clique become Unitarians. But they mean to *stick in*.

J. H. NEWMAN *Loss and Gain* III, iv, 321.

—to **stick out**. 1. To be stubbornly unyielding, to persist.

He would have clearly liked to *stick it out*, but at last he struck.

STEVENSON *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* i

2. [U. S.] To be prominent or conspicuous

'Of her' is all very well, now and then, but when it occurs too often it '*sticks out*,' as Mr. Henry James would say

*The Daily Chronicle* London, Dec. 9, 1902.

—to **stick to one's colors**. To adhere firmly to one's cause; keep one's flag flying.

—to **stick to one's fingers**. To remain in one's possession as by adhering to one's fingers: said of money obtained illicitly —to **stick up**. [Australan] 1. To hold up or be held up by bushrangers, or highwaymen. 2. To rob a bank or station. —**sticker-up**. 1. A highwayman or bushranger. 2. One who does the cooking in the bush, using a straight stick as a spit for the meat. —to **stick up for**. To champion, uphold, defend.

I shall always like him (Whittier) the better for "*sticking up*" for old New England.

LOWELL *Letters* I, 20.

2. [Brit.] To make love to.

I doant like to see a boy of seventeen *sticking up* to a gal.

CAROLINE GEAREY *Rural Life* X, 237.

**sticker.** 1. A guest who lingers. 2. A difficult question, a stumper.

3. An apt rejoinder.

**stick-in-the-mud.** A dull and unprogressive person.

Shut up, old *stick-in-the-mud*, and let's join the ladies

*Punch* Jan. 6, 1880.

**stickler.** One given to contending over trifles; a zealot; a precisian.

I'm a bit of a *stickler* for what's gentlemanly myself.

KERNAHAN *Scoundrels & Co.* XV.

**stiff, to cut up.** [Brit.] To become angry; to show temper.

The old gent *cut up uncommon stiff*.

THACKERAY *Misc.* II, 272.

**stiff, to do a bit of.** [Brit.] To pay money for a bill of exchange, especially an accommodation bill.

**stiff-necked.** Not yielding to influence; obstinate in sin; stubborn; incorrigible. *Psalms* LXXV, 5.

**stile, to help (a lame dog) over a.** [Brit.] To assist some one in a difficulty; to lend a helping hand.

I can . . . *help a lame dog over a stile* (which was Mark's phrase for doing a generous thing).

KINGSLEY *Two Years Ago* XXV.

**still hunt.** 1. An election conducted without any outward semblance of activity and with some underhand work. 2. A policy of declaring openly that one is not seeking a political office while secretly working to secure it. A term that dates from Samuel J. Tilden's candidacy for the Presidential office in 1876.

**stingo.** [Brit.] Strong drink, especially humming or frothy ale.

Let us fortify with a horn or two of humming *stingo*.

EGAN *Real Life* VII.

**stink.** [Brit.] A disagreeable exposure; the result of such an exposure.

The newspapers of the district had raised  
ally call a *stink*

what the patters of his class proverb-  
MAYHEW *London Labor* I, 250

**stinkard, stinker.** [Brit.] An objectionable man; a mean wretch; a rotter.

He asked with great emotion if I thought him a monster and a *stinkard*.

SMOLLETT *Roderick Random* XXXIV.

**stive.** [Brit.] To stifle; also, to crowd.

One can get rid of a few hours every day in that way, instead of *stiving* in a damnable hotel.

GEORGE ELIOT *Daniel Deronda* liv.

**stiver, not to care a.** Not to care to the value of a stiver, a Dutch coin worth two cents.

Entre nous, mon cher, I care not a *stiver* for popularity. LYTTON *My Novel* IX, 3.

**stock.** [Brit.] A blockhead, dolt, or fool.

What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you're an anchorite! A vile, insensible *stock*.

SHERIDAN *Rivals* act iii, sc 1

**stock in, to take.** To be interested in; give credence to: usually with a negative.

I never *took stock* of that story.

BRET HARTE *First Family of Tasajara* V.

**stock in trade.** One's mental or material resources: from the goods kept on hand for sale by a tradesman or pedler; also, a workman's tools.

She has ideals, convictions, aspirations—a whole *stock-in-trade* of things that a good many girls seem to get on very well without. WM. BLACK *Green Pastures* I.

**stock, lock, and barrel.** The whole gun; hence, everything; all.

"Cut the whole thing, *stock, lock and barrel*," said his lordship.

EDMUND YATES *Rocks Ahead* III, 111.

**stock phrase.** Any expression worn threadbare by iteration.

**stolen waters are sweet.** That which is obtained by stealth is well-flavored: applied in many phrases to fruit, game, love, etc.

*Stolen waters are sweet*, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.

Proverbs IX, 17.

**stomach, to stick in the.** [Brit.] To remember with anger or disgust.

Compare GIZZARD.

I have not had the opportunity till now of telling you what *sticks in my stomach*.

BROWNE *Works* II, 70.

**stone-blind.** Blind as a stone; completely blind.

Dick Heldar . . . has gone blind     He has been *stone-blind* for nearly two months  
KIPLING *The Light That Failed* XIII

**stone-fence.** [U. S.] A drink of undiluted whisky.

Those recondite beverages, cocktail, *stone-fence* and sherry cobbler  
WASHINGTON IRVING *Knickerbocker* 241

**stone's cast or throw, within a.** Within a short distance, such as that to which a stone may be thrown; a hundred yards or so.

*Within a stone's cast of the parish church*  
FROST *Reminiscences of a Country Journalist* VIII, 69.

**stones, those who live in glass houses should not throw.** One who is vulnerable should not blame or attack others: an ancient Spanish proverb quoted in English by Mabbe, in his "Spanish Rogue" (1623). Compare GLASS.

**stone-throwing.** Backbiting; faultfinding.

**stone turned, to leave no.** To omit no means of gaining an object; use all the means at one's command.

*He left no stone turned to do the work which was set before him*  
STANLEY *Sermons East* 108.

**stool-pigeon.** [U. S.] A decoy pigeon; hence, a person employed to decoy victims into gambling-houses, etc. By extension, an informer or spy employed by the police, but not a member of the force.

**stoals, to fall or sit down between two.** See under BETWEEN.

**stop off or over.** [U. S.] To break one's journey.

**stop one's mouth.** To silence with a bribe or promise.

*If you would have her silent stop her mouth with that ring*  
WYCHERLEY *Gentleman Dancing Master* act v, sc 1

**store.** [U. S.] A shop; a place where things are sold.

In America the word *shop* is confined to the place where things are made or done, as "barber-shop," "carpenter-shop," a place where things are sold is a "store"

FREEMAN *Impressions of the United States* 61

**store by, to set great or little.** To value, prize or regard much or little.

*Much store has been set for centuries upon the use of our English classical education*  
RUSKIN *Unto the Last* IV

**store, in.** Waiting, ready, in reserve.

**story.** A euphemism for a lie, used by or to children; a falsehood; hence, **story-teller, a liar.**

As they can't all be true, some of them must be *stories*  
*The Referee* London, April 17, 1887.

—to make a long story short. To summarize or tell in brief

**Stoughton bottle.** [U. S.] A stupid person; a figurehead; dolt: a term derived from the black or dark-green bottles of Dr. Stoughton's bitters, shaped like a log cabin and used in the Presidential campaign of 1840. FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary*.

In the effete East there is at present an effort to explain the origin of the familiar phrase, "sitting like a *Stoughton bottle*," meaning to sit idle and unresponsive in the presence of a great opportunity for activity or enjoyment. One explanation is that at or before the civil war period there was a brand of bitters, of very general consumption known as Stoughton's bitters; that the bitters had qualities of incitement or excitement which made it much sought for; that the bottle standing on the shelf of the shop in which the tonic was sold was the cynosure of all eyes and that it looked very sedate by comparison with the individual who had imbibed, and hence the figure of speech.

Others have sought to trace the phrase back to Chaucer by whom it is said to have been written "*stoten bottle*," and still others would have us believe that the true form

of the phrase is "stoat-in-bottle," though what it would mean in either case is not exactly made clear. Either of these explanations may be the right one, but we should hate to believe that a phrase could have traveled all that distance down the ages without getting some sort of recognition from the lexicographers

*The Columbus Dispatch* March 28, 1912.

**stovepipe hat.** A black high silk hat: from its resemblance to a stove-pipe.

Here and there some forlorn individual exhibited himself in a black coat and a *stove-pipe hat* J. D. BORTHWICK *Three Years, California* xxii, 333.

**straddle.** [U. S.] To pose as if favoring both sides of a political question. Assume a position of neutrality; sit on or bestride a fence.

It should be remembered that he never *straddled* the labor question

*The Boston Traveller* August 20, 1884.

**strafe.** [Ger.] To punish: a word current during the World War from its frequent use, especially in Germany, in the invocation, "Gott *strafe* England!"—"God punish England!"

**straight.** 1. Without admixture; undiluted. 2. Free from equivocation; without covin: used sometimes adverbially, in very truth; honestly.

*Straight!* . . . I'm on the job for better or for worse CHEVALIER *Coster's Courtship*

3. Accepting the whole without reservation or exception; as, to vote a *straight ticket*. 4. Modest; decent; morally clean.

—**straight face.** A grave or solemn face —**straight goods.** [U. S.] 1. On the square; reliable; decent; honest of persons

What do I know about him? Why, that he's all right That he's *straight goods*.

KENNEDY *Sailor Tramp* XIX.

2. Free from adulteration; of uniform grade or quality; reliable, sound; of goods. —**straight ticket.** [U. S.] The complete list of a political party's nominees —**straight tip.** Authoritative or inside information: originally a racing phrase.

**strain at a gnat.** To fuss over non-essentials and shut one's eyes to enormities.

Ye blind guides, which *strain at a gnat* and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup, and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

*Matthew* XXIII, 24-25.

**strait.** 1. Restricted; narrow; close.

It matters not how *strait* the gate,

How charged with punishments the scroll,

I am the master of my fate,

I am the captain of my soul!

WILLIAM E. HENLEY *To R. T. H. B.*

2. Destitute of funds; hard-pressed; needy.

—in *straitened circumstances.* Financially embarrassed, in need

**strait-jacket or waistcoat.** A sleeveless garment used to confine the arms of a violent or dangerous lunatic or prisoner: often used figuratively.

The English Gothic was confined, in its insanity, by a *strait-waistcoat* of perpendicular lines.

RUSKIN *Stones of Venice* I, 22.

**stranded.** Left helpless, as from lack of funds; left in straits or difficulties.

**strange.** Exciting wonder or curiosity; odd; queer; remarkable. —**strange woman.** [Biblical.] A courtesan. —**to make (a thing) strange.**

To treat as (something) astonishing, surprising, or vexatious —**to make oneself**

**strange.** To absent oneself so long as to be a stranger: usually with a negative.

**strap-hanger.** [U. S.] A passenger who supports and steadies himself by holding on a strap while standing in a railroad-car during the busy or rush hours.

**strapper.** A huge or bulky person or object; especially a stalwart, swinging woman. Hence, **strapping**, tall, well-made, robust.

'She's a rare one, is she not, Jane?' 'Yes, Sir' 'A *strapper*, a real *strapper*, big, brown and buxom.'

CHARLOTTE BRONTË *Jane Eyre* XX

**straw.** 1. The merest trifle. 2. A slight circumstance or something that serves as an indication.—**a face of straw.** A false show or pretense; a sham —**a man of straw.** 1. A professional witness; one who perjures himself for pay. 2. An unreliable person; one who pretends to power that he can not exercise.—**not to care a straw.** Not to be concerned at all; to be absolutely indifferent.

The British Government does *not care one straw* what religion its subjects profess  
*The Spectator* London, Oct. 1, 1887

—**straw-bail.** Surety offered by an irresponsible person or by one who can not furnish the necessary qualifications.—**straw-** or **hay-ride.** [U. S.] A ride for pleasure in a large vehicle filled with straw or hay; a rural merry-making usually at harvest-time.

—**straw vote.** [U. S.] A non-official test vote, often affording an indication of public sentiment of what may be expected, as at an election —**the last straw.** The final trial of patience or endurance; the culminating circumstance or event from the proverb, "it is the *last straw* that breaks the camel's back"—the last in a cumulative series of motives or that which finally brings about a catastrophe, as the feather that turns the scale, the last drop that makes the cup run over —**to break a straw.** To quarrel —**to draw straws.** 1. To draw lots with straws. 2. To drop, as the eyelids, from weariness.

'Tis time for all honest folks to go to bed Indeed, my eyes *draw straws*.

SWIFT *Polite Conversations*

**strawberry blonde.** [U. S.] A red-haired woman.

**streak.** [U. S.] A mental twist, kink, or peculiarity.

You know almost everybody has their queer *streaks* *Widow Bedott Papers* 121

—**streak of luck.** A period of good fortune —**to go like a streak.** To go very fast.

**street, the.** [U. S.] With the definite article, the thoroughfare in which the financial dealings of a city are transacted. In New York, Wall Street.

—**in the same street.** [Brit.] Equal with under similar conditions

Though not *in the same street* with King Olaf, it wouldn't do to estimate Singing Bird's chances too lightly.

KENNARD *Right Sort* XX

—**that's not my street.** [Brit.] That's not my concern; that's not my way of doing things.

**strenuous life.** Active and energetic existence.

I wish to preach, not the doctrine of ignoble ease, but the doctrine of the *strenuous life*  
THEODORE ROOSEVELT Speech in Hamilton Club, Chicago, April 10, 1899

**stretch.** [Brit.] To lie; exaggerate; hence, **stretcher**, a falsehood.

—**at a stretch.** [Brit.] Without intermission, continuously

She could not entertain the child long *on a stretch* *BULWER Night and Morning* II, 8.

—**stretch a leg or one's legs.** To take a walk

I have *stretched my legs* up Tottenham Hill to overtake you

WALTON *Compleat Angler* 43

—**stretch one's legs according to the coverlet.** To adopt oneself to an environment; to alter one's procedure according to circumstances —**to stretch out.** To extend oneself and pull hard: an order to oarsmen, to gain speed. Hence, to work harder or to increase one's speed.

**strike.** 1. To cease work as a means of enforcing a demand, of uttering a protest, or of securing the redress of some grievance.

A number of them [New York sailors] . . . *struck*, formed a band, marched about the city, and compelled seamen employed at the old rates to join them

McMASTER *People of the U. S.* ii, 618.

2. [U. S.] (1) To come upon; attain; reach; as, we *struck* the river at night. (2) To approach and accost with a request; as, he *struck* me for a loan. 3. To advance, as in years: only in the past participle *stricken*. 4. [Eng.] To pick pockets and secure money. 5. [U. S.]

To promote legislation against some particular corporation or industry.

A legislator "*strikes*" a corporation, as I have indicated, when he introduces some bill calculated to injure it directly or indirectly; his purpose being not to have the bill pass, but to compel the corporation to buy him off.

H. C. MERWIN in *Atlantic Monthly*, Feb. 1894.

—**strike-a-light**. A device consisting of a flint and steel or pyrites which when brought into violent contact produce sparks used in kindling.—**strike bill**. [U. S.] A measure injurious to important interests introduced in a legislative body in order that members may be induced to kill it.

—**strike camp, or one's tent**. To prepare for departure, to pack one's belongings for moving away.

The enemy *struck their tents* and form'd in line of battle.

London Gazette No. 4337, 1707

—**strike-me-dead**. Small beer: a seaman's phrase.

—**strike me luck or lucky**. [Brit.] Strike or shake hands and wish me luck.

*Strike me lucky*, mates all, if the whole affair warn't a complete trap.

CUPPLES *Green Hand* I, 9.

—**to strike a bargain**. To agree to the terms of a transaction.

I *struck a bargain* with an old *marwarri* over a small stone. CRAWFORD *Mr. Isaacs* I.

—**to strike at**. To direct a blow toward; to attack.—**to strike back**. 1. To give a blow, or make an attack, in return for one received. 2. To swim back and out to one side, as fish, instead of following the leader of a weir into the weir.—**to strike below**. To put cargo into a vessel's hold or in its proper place below decks.—**to strike down**. 1. To fell with a blow; as, *to strike down* an adversary. 2. To attack and destroy or put an end to; as, *to strike down* an evil. 3. To pack and secure in barrels, and stow away, as fish.—**to strike for**. 1. To make an attack or attacks in behalf or defense of; as, *to strike for* freedom. 2. To make a sudden start for; as, *to strike for* home.—**to strike home**. To strike to the point or place aimed at; as, his remark *struck home*—**to strike in**. 1. *Med.* To leave the surface and create internal disturbance, as an eruptive disease. 2. To join in after another or others have begun; as, *to strike in* with a company of singers. 3. To break in suddenly with a remark or remarks; interrupt, interpose; as, at this point the tall man *struck in*.

But ere he could proceed further, Louis arose and *struck in* with a tone of . . . dignity and authority.

SCOTT *Quentin Durward* XXXIII.

4. To make an effort or a move; as in support or favor of; join in; take sides, unite.

Men that will *strike in* with all Governments, purely for the sake of Preferment.

HEARNE *Collect.* III, 36.

5. To enter suddenly.—**to strike into**. 1. To start off suddenly into; break into, as *to strike into* a run. 2. To turn off suddenly into; go suddenly into; as, *to strike into* an inn along the road.—**to strike it rich**. To find a valuable vein or pocket of ore; hence, to come into some good fortune, especially in a financial way.

Courage and hope are kept up by the expectation of *striking it rich*.

*Harper's Magazine* April, 1885, p. 698.

—**to strike off**. 1. To erase, cancel, or remit from an account; hence, to deduct; as, *to strike off* the disputed items of a bill. 2. To cut off in one blow, as with a sword or ax.

The King gave orders *to strike off* his head.

LANE *Arabian Nights* I, 96

3. To print, as, *to strike off* a thousand copies of a leaflet.—**to strike oil**. See under *oil*.—**to strike one's colors**. [Military.] To surrender, to haul down the flag.—

—**to strike out**. 1. To work out or devise promptly; contrive; as, *to strike out* a scheme. 2. To make a stroke in swimming or skating; also, to make any sudden start; as, *to strike out* for the shore; *to strike out* for freedom. 3. To stretch sole-leather by rolling or with a tool. 4. To transfer cargo from the hold of a vessel to the dock.—**to strike speechless**. To be unable to find utterance or to command speech, as from astonishment, fear, exhaustion, etc.

Some powers *strike me speechless* for a time! *Troublous Raigne* of King John I, 378.

—**to strike twelve**. To do or have done one's best; win a great success: used also [in combination with "all at once," "the first time," etc.

Their best parts were slowly revealed; they did not *strike twelve the first time*.

EMERSON *Traits* xix, 310.

There are some writers who, to use a homely colloquialism, *strike twelve all at once*: their first achievement tells us all about them.

J A NOBLE in *The Academy*, Feb. 10, 1894, p 119

—**to strike up**. 1. To begin to play or sing, as, *to strike up a tune*. 2. To start up; begin by mutual acquiescence or consent; as, *to strike up a conversation*.

We hear of his facility in *striking up* an acquaintance with women

STEVENSON *Familiar Studies* 48.

—**to strike work**. To find work.

**striker**. [U. S.] 1. A soldier assigned to an officer for duty; a batman.  
2. A bouncer or hired man employed to bulldoze patrons.

He was one of the most accomplished *strikers*, as they are called, in the employ of the hells

*The Country Merchant* 317

3. An apprentice engineer on the Mississippi River steamboats. 4. A workingman who has ceased work, as in an effort to secure the redress of some grievance, etc.

**string**. I. n. 1. A hoax. 2. A connected series or succession, as of things; as, a *string* of lies; a *string* of motor-cars. 3. A drove, as of stock or horses. II. v. To impose upon; deceive; to hoax.

—**to get or have one on a string**. 1. To bind a person to oneself by some strong influence. 2. To place a person in a condition of disquietude or anxiety: usually concerning something expressed —**to have a string to it**. To limit so as to leave some control still in the hands of the donor. said of a gift —**with a string to it**. [U. S.] An offer or present which may be recalled under certain conditions, an Indian gift

**stripe**. [U. S.] A particular class or type; kind; sort; variety.

Every member of the Democratic Party, of whatever *stripe* is perfectly honest.

*The Congressional Globe* May 18, 1853, p 1206

**strong**. I. n. Having great strength or bodily force. II. adv. Forcibly. Used both adjectively and adverbially with various meanings in combination, as in the following:—**strong arm or hand**. Power; authority, law and order; might —**strong-box**. A box in which treasures, as money, jewels, etc., are kept —**strong for**. [U. S.] Favorably inclined toward: supporting politically. —**strong-room**. A treasure room or vault —**to be going strong**. To thrive; prosper; continue with vigor —**to come it strong**. To show great boldness and daring, make statements difficult to believe; pitch yarns —**to come out strong**. 1. To make a show or splurge; indulge in big display. 2. To express one's sentiments with vigor —**to go it strong**. To act determinedly or with vigor; also, to behave recklessly —**to pitch it strong**. To resort to exaggeration; make incredible statements

**struck on, to be**. [Brit.] To be impressed by the beauty, character, form, or charms of. See the following:

"I'm glad *you're struck on* her," said Bob

*The Family Herald* p 131 (1893)

**stuck on, to be**. [U. S.] To be in love or infatuated with; to be captivated by; to have one's mind or fancy set on. Compare the preceding.

**stuck-up**. Affecting an air of personal importance; offensively pretentious; snobbish; purse-proud; priggish; vain; conceited: used also adjectively.

She was dressed like a doll, but she didn't act a bit *stuck up*. *Betsy Bobbet* 272.

**stud**. [U. S.] The height of a room from the floor to the ceiling.

You cannot think how pretty the room looks, though with such a low *stud* that I have to get acclimated to it, and still fear to be crushed

MRS HAWTHORNE in J Hawthorne's *Nathaniel Hawthorne* I, 369

**stuff**. 1. The fundamental element of anything; as the *stuff* of poetry; soul-stuff. 2. The products of industry, whether in art, literature,



craftsmanship, etc. Specifically, among writers and journalists, matter for the printer; copy. 3. Worthless ideas; nonsensical or valueless matter. 4. Stolen goods.—**stuff and nonsense**. Rubbish; bosh; twaddle.

It's all *stuff and nonsense*, all this talk about dust-yards being unhealthy

MAYHEW *London Labour* II, 175.

**stump**. [U. S.] 1. To nonplus, puzzle, confound; to strike or stub.

This answer *stumped* the court. The judge advocate was only mystified, the court was *stumped*. Mr. BENTON of Missouri, Speech in the United States Senate, July, 1848

2. To conduct an electioneering campaign by making speeches on political subjects.

—to go on, mount, or take the **stump**. [U. S. Politics] To travel over a country making political speeches from the former practise of standing on a tree-stump in addressing one's audience

Furnishing the President with a pretext for *stumping* the West in the interest of Congress.

—to stir one's **stumps**. [Brit.] To walk more rapidly, to increase one's speed.

Then cease your canting sobs and groans

And stir your stumps to save your bones

BRIDGES *Burlesque Homer* 5.

—to **stump up**. [Brit.] To pay a debt in ready money

Father has *stumped up* a five pound note

BLACKMORE *Christowell* xxi

**sub**. [L.] Under. It is used in various Latin phrases met in English literature.—**sub dio**. [L.] In the open air; under the sky.

The sturdy savages pride themselves in living *sub dio* the whole year round

SHORTHOUSE *John Inglesant* xviii

—**sub hasta**. [L.] Under the spear, by auction. Compare **SPEAR**—**sub Jove frigido**. Under the chilly sky in the open air —**sub rosa**. [L.] In strict confidence; privately, literally, under the rose because in Egypt, the rose was the emblem of Harpocrates, the god of silence

Had he a 'friend' *sub rosa*? No, Sir!

N. P. WILLIS *Lady Jane* II, lxxvii

—**sub silentio**. In silence, without taking notice.

The Bishop would probably have passed over the Quayle's second communication *sub silentio* as he had done the former

KEBLE *Life of Bishop Wilson* XVI, 511

**such and such**. Certain; some; used as an indefinite to generalize and in avoiding name, number, designation or quantity.

*Such and such* ideas are attended with *such and such* other ideas

BERKELEY *Principles of Human Knowledge*, Works I, 171

It became the custom to ask what coffee house *such and such* a man frequented!

E. CALLOW *Old London Taverns* I, 247.

**sucker**. 1. One who is easily imposed upon; a foolish fellow; a green-horn. 2. One who lives upon others and earns his welcome by flattery; a hanger-on; a sycophant; a parasite. 3. A hard drinker. 4. [U. S.] A native or inhabitant of the State of Illinois. 5. A North American fresh-water fish.

The *suckers* [of Illinois] are so called after the fish of that name, from going up the river to the mines, and returning at the season when the *sucker* [fish] makes its migrations

C. F. HOFFMAN *A Winter in the Far West* I, 207

**sugar**. 1. Flattering words or kindly or gentle speech intended to soften stern reality. 2. [Austral.] Money down; cash on the spot; ready money —**sugar-plum**. A compliment, bit of flattery; a gift, gratuity, or a bribe: from the small round or oval sweetmeat or candy

While he delivered these *sugar-plums* he did not look in her face. READE *Many a Slip*. An artist whom the rich English world was beginning to pet and pelt with gilt *sugar-plums*.

TROLLOPE *Chronicle of Barset* I, xxiv

**suggestive.** Designed or tending to rouse improper thoughts; offensive to modesty and delicacy: said of actions, books, pictures, plays, etc.

**sun.** Anything brilliant and magnificent or that is a source of splendor; a glorious or resplendent object; as, the *Sun* of righteousness.—**a place in the sun.** A position of prominence in the affairs of the world a phrase used by William II of Germany in discussing the attitude of foreign countries toward Germany, at Hamburg in 1901.

It will now be my duty to see to it that this *place in the sun* shall remain our undisputed possession. WILLIAM II, German Emperor, Speech on the Acquisition of Kiaochow, China, June 18, 1901.

—**from sun to sun.** 1. From day to day. 2. From sunrise to sunset.—**sundew.** A marsh- or bog-plant from the tips of the hairs on the leaves of which a viscid liquid is exuded.—**sundrop.** An American species of evening primrose having large yellow flowers.—**sun of Austerlitz.** An unexpected sign of good fortune from the sunburst through the clouds over the battle-field of Austerlitz which was taken by Napoleon I as a sign of victory.—**the rising of the sun.** The Orient as that part of the world in which the sun apparently rises.—**to forsake the setting sun.** To turn one's back on such as have fallen from power; to desert a lost cause.—**to have been in the sunshine.** To be bewildered as from sunlight; hence, to be fuddled with drink; be intoxicated.

He was in that condition which his groom indicated with poetic ambiguity by saying, "master had been in the sunshine." GEORGE ELIOT *Janel's Repentance* I.

—**to worship the rising sun.** To court the powers that are gaining ascendancy.

—**under the sun.** In some place on earth: used as an intensive.—**with the sun.** In the same direction as the apparent daily motion of the sun

**sundowner.** 1. [U. S.] A physician in government employ who conducts a private practise after office-hours. 2. [Austral.] A tramp who usually arrives at a station at sundown that he may obtain free food and lodging for the night.

**Sunflower State.** [U. S.] Kansas.

**sup with Pluto.** To die: in allusion to Pluto as the god of the underworld where dwelt the spirits of the dead.

**sure.** Without doubt; certainly; of course; surely.

—**a sure card or thing.** One who or that which is entirely trustworthy; a certainty  
As sure a card as ever won the bet. SHAKESPEARE *Titus Andronicus* act v, sc 1.

—**as sure as a gun, death, eggs, fate, taxes, the creed, etc.** As sure as certainty, absolutely certain

She's distracted, as sure as a gun. STEELE *Tender Husband* act iii, sc. 2  
—**to be sure.** Indeed; certainly; as, what a surprise, to be sure! Used to indicate something unusual or unexpected.—**to have a sure thing.** To be certain of obtaining beyond any doubt; to have a certainty.—**to make sure.** To arrange so that there can be no failure.

**surprise-party.** [U. S.] A social gathering of persons at a friend's house, without previous notice to the host.

**suspicion.** [Brit.] A very small quantity, a slight degree; the least bit.

A mere spice or *suspicion* of austerity, which made it all the more enjoyable

HAWTHORNE *Our Old Home*

**swag.** 1. Stolen goods; any property obtained by robbery; plunder. 2. A fence, or shop for selling stolen goods. 3. [Austral.] A tramp's bundle or pack; hence, baggage of any sort; luggage.

The unmarried shearer, roaming, *swag* on back, . . . leads an active, pleasant life enough. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, July 26, 1902

**swagger.** I. *n.* Bravado, bluster, insolence; swank. II. *v.* To strut; brag, boast; hence, **swaggerer**, one who swaggers.

The bunters who *swagger* in the streets of London.

GOLDSMITH *Essays X*

A ruffian is the same as a *swaggerer*, so called because endeavoring that side to sway or weigh down whereon he engageth. FULLER *Worthies, London*.

—**swagger-stick**. A small cane or a walking-stick carried by a British soldier when off duty.

**swap**. 1. To trade in exchange; barter. 2. To change from one place to another.—**to swap horses crossing a stream**. To run a great risk when in a critical position.

**swash**. 1. A blustering noise; boisterous vamping. 2. Worthless printed sentimental trash.

**swashbuckler**. A swaggering ruffian or bully.

*Swashbucklers*, from *swashing*, or making a noise on bucklers.

FULLER *Worthies*, London.

**swear by**. To put implicit confidence in; to be absolutely sure of.

We have a first rate fellow in command of the cavalry His fellows all *swear by* him.

HENRY With *Lee in Virginia* 91.

**swear in**. To administer the oath of office to; to induct into office by administering a prescribed oath.

The process of *swearing in* the members of the Lower House began.

*The Times* London, Aug. 16, 1891.

As soon as I have been *sworn in*, and subscribed. GRAY *Corresp. with Nichols* 80.

**swear like a fishwife, a lord, a sailor, a trooper**. To curse with facility and variety; to be expert in the use of profanity.

**swear off**. To renounce; abandon; promise to quit; especially, to *swear off* drinking.

Just as a man who has *sworn off* for a long time loses his desire for drink.

*The Spectator*, London, Feb. 16, 1896.

**swear out**. 1. To abjure, forswear, swear off.

Your grace hath *sworn out* housekeeping

SHAKESPEARE *Love's Labour's Lost* act ii, sc. 1.

2. [U. S.] To obtain the issue of a warrant, restraining order, etc., by swearing to a complaint or petition.

The president (of the railroad) *swore out* warrants for the arrest of all the members of the committee.

HAMBLETON *General Manager's Story* XV.

**sweat**. I. *n.* 1. Fuming impatience; haste; worry; hurry. 2. Hard toil; drudgery. II. *v.* 1. To put under severe examination so as to extract information from. 2. To work incessantly. 3. To extort money or labor from. 4. To be in a state of perturbation or anxiety. 5. To suffer for the consequence of; smart. 6. To pare and remill, as coin: a criminal offense. 7. To wear down or away by friction.—**sweat-box**. 1. [U. S.] The torture cell in which prisoners were put through the "third degree," either as punishment, or to extort confessions. 2. [Naut.] A cell in the lowest part of a ship.

This *sweat-box* is . . . pitch dark and hot as hell.

CHURCHWARD *Blackbirding in S. Pacific* 28

3. A telephone-booth.—**sweater**. One who practises sweating in any sense.—**sweat-shop**. [U. S.] Any place of employment in which the worker is overworked and underpaid, especially in the clothing trade.

All but 15 of the 385 wholesale clothing manufacturers in New York have their goods made in 'sweat-shops.'

*The Westminster Gazette*, London, Nov. 2, 1895.

Under the *Sweat Shop* law of the State of New York the manufacture of articles of wearing apparel is now specifically forbidden in any tenement house without a license.

MALVERY *Soul Market* XI (1906).

—**the sweat of one's face or brow**. Hard labor: part of the curse imposed upon Adam for eating the apple.

In the *sweat of thy face* shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it thou wast taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Genesis III, 19.

**sweeten the pot**. [U. S.] To increase one's holdings; enlarge one's speculation: a phrase borrowed from the game of poker in which it

means to chip in the amount of the ante, especially before a new deal, when all players have passed a jack-pot.

**sweet on, to be.** To be in love with; dote on; be fond of. Formerly, to coax; wheedle; allure; court.

"Mark my words, Rawdon," she said. "You will have Miss Sharp one day for your relation."

"What relation,—my cousin, hey, Mrs. Bute? James *sweet on* her, hey?" inquired the waggish officer. THACKERAY *Vanity Fair*.

**sweet tooth.** One who has a liking for candies, dainties, or sweet things.

**swell.** [Brit.] In the fashion; stylish; superior or distinguished; of good birth or quality, whether of persons or things; hence, swelledom. Fashionable society; the world of swells or the region they inhabit; people of rank or fortune.

I'm no end of a *swell* at politics.

BOOTHBY *Maker of Nations* IX.

**swelled head, to have a.** To suffer from an exaggerated sense of one's own importance.

**swell-mobsman.** [Brit.] A well-dressed pickpocket; hence, **swell mob**, such pickpockets collectively.

The *swell-mobsman's* eye is for ever wandering in search of his prey

*Quarterly Review*, June, 1856.

**swim, in the.** In league or company with; in the current of popular life or business, opinion or fashion.

And since I see myself in *swim* with such good company

R. BRIDGES *Growth of Love* LXIII.

Who knows nearly everybody in the *swim* of European society

GUNTER *Mr. Potter of Texas* XIV.

**swing.** To administer or conduct successfully; carry out, as a transaction; manage, as a business.

—in full **swing.** In full operation; at top speed; without hindrance —to give full **swing to.** To indulge to the extreme; free from restraint; let loose. —to have full **swing.** To have uncontrolled power —to swing around the circle. 1. To go on a junketing trip 2. [U S] To go through an entire series, as of offices, studies, etc —to swing in with. To join others in an enterprise or movement

**swipes.** [Brit.] Small beer, or any weak drink.

**switchel.** [U. S.] A drink of molasses and water, with an addition of vinegar, ginger, or rum; hence, any strong drink.

The luncheon was packed in a large basket, with bottles of root-beer and a jug of *switchel* CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER *Being a Boy* p. 26

**swizzle.** [Brit.] The favorite "long" drink of the British West Indies, made of rum, green lime, sugar, ice, and seltzer, stirred in a tall glass by rotating a **swizzle-stick** between the palms until the drink froths.

A glass of *swizzle*, the most salubrious drink in hot weather

LE FEVRE *Life Travels of a Physician* III, III, i, 86.

**swoop.** A sudden approach.—at one fell swoop. At a single blow or stroke, as when an eagle descends upon its prey.

The Church Temporalities' Bill in 1833 . . . at one swoop had suppressed the Irish episcopates.

DISRAELI *Tancred* II, v.

He made one fell swoop upon purse, watch and all

WASHINGTON IRVING *Tales of a Traveller* II, iv, 108.

**sword.** With the definite article: (1) Military power as opposed to civil power. (2) War. (3) The cause of ruin and death.—to be at **swords' points.** To be hostile; figuratively, to be on unfriendly terms.—to put to the **sword.** To kill; massacre; slaughter.

A warrant to put every man, woman and child to the sword, HALL CAINE *Scapegoat* XVII.

## T

**T, to a.** Exactly, precisely: probably in allusion to the mechanics' T-square.

He answered the description the page gave to a T, sir

FARQUHAR *Lovers and a Bottle* act IV, sc. 3.

**T, to be marked with a.** To be branded as a thief: from the practise formerly of branding thieves with that letter. Hence, to be known as a thief.

**tabby.** [Brit.] An old maid; a gossip; a busybody.

When he can get into a circle of *tabbies* he is just in his element.

TREVELYAN *Macaulay* I, 241.

**table, to go to the.** To partake of communion.

**table, to lay upon the.** To defer the consideration of a measure to some future time, or, sometimes, indefinitely.

The petition was ordered to *lie upon the table* EVANS *Parliamentary Debates* 336

**table, upon the.** Under discussion or consideration.

The facts are, so to speak, all *upon the table*, and I will merely touch upon the main heads of the case.

HAGGARD *Dawn* XLIII.

**tableau. 1.** A living picture or picture-like scene represented by one or more silent and motionless persons in proper attitude and costume.

And now came a *tableau* in which Anne, as the Goddess of Liberty, was poised on a barrel mounted on three tables, one above the other.

CONSTANCE F. WOOLSON *Anne* 253.

2. Any situation or effect suddenly, dramatically, or sensationally produced.

**table d'hôte. 1.** A public or common table for guests at a hotel: literally, the host's table. **2.** A complete meal of several courses served in a public dining-room for a fixed price.

**tack.** [Brit.] Food of any kind, but especially that of poor quality; hence, **hard tack**, army or navy biscuit—that is, coarse fare; **soft tack**, bread—that is, good fare.

**tacks, to get down to hard.** To come to fundamentals; get to the base of.

**tacky or tackey. I. a. 1.** Neglected; shabby; ill-kempt. **2.** Vulgar; given to pretentious show; offending good taste. **II. n. 1.** An ungainly or slovenly man. **2.** An ill-fed, ill-conditioned horse.

**tad.** [U.S.] A small boy. By analogy of *Ted* for "Theodore," perhaps a contraction of *Thaddeus*. Sometimes explained as a contraction of *tadpole*

**taffy.** [U.S.] Sweet words; blarney; flattery: used also as a verb.

**Taffy.** [Brit.] A Welshman: from the Welsh pronunciation of *Davy* (David).

**tag, rag, and bobtail.** The rabble or common herd; the mob or hoi polloi. He (King William IV.) lives a strange life at Brighton, with *tag, rag, and bob-tail* about him, and always open house

GREVILLE *Memoirs* Jan. 19, 1837[?].

**tail. I. n. 1.** The side of a coin opposite that bearing the head.

If the party . . . calls heads or *tails*, and all three coins are as he calls them, he wins.

EGAN *Life in London* 279.

2. A girl's hair, when plaited or bound in a single strand.

I noticed half a dozen groups of slender damsels with short frocks and long *tails*  
*The Congregationalist*, London, Aug. 4, 1887

3. A line or queue at a box-office. II. v. [Australian Slang.] To herd cattle or tend sheep.

The cattle, no longer *tailed* or followed daily, as a shepherd does sheep.

BOLDREWOOD *Colonial Reformer* 231

—let every herring hang by its own tail. Let every one attend to his business  
tail-pulling. [Brit. Publishers' Cant.] The publication at the author's expense of  
books that have little or no merit.—to get the tail down. To show signs of wavering  
courage; lose pluck.—to turn tail. To run from, in a cowardly way, to turn back,  
retreat.

"Never thought I should live to turn tail in this way," growled one soldier to another  
as they passed out. *English Illustrated Magazine* 1887.

—to twist the lion's tail. [U S.] To do something to provoke the British people,  
or press, especially for political effect.—with the tail in water. [Brit.] Thriving  
—with the tail between the legs. Exhibiting alarm or suffering, as an underdog  
in a fight, or a dog in the cold

tailors of Tooley street. Persons who overrate their own importance  
and make ridiculous pretensions: in allusion to three tailors of Tooley  
street, London, who presented a petition to Parliament which began:  
"We, the people of England."

take occurs in many idiomatic phrases.—in a pretty take on. [Brit.] In  
a state bordering on hysteria; much affected or grieved.—take aback.  
Astound, surprise, bewilder.—take a breath. [Brit.] To take advice; consider  
—take account of. Give attention to; make note of.—take a rise out of. To  
stir to anger, as by making fun of, also, to humiliate by ridicule; mortify.

Possibly taking a rise out of his worship the Corregidor DE QUINCEY *Spanish Nun*  
—take it from me. Take my word for it, accept my assurance. a form of assevera-  
tion.

Dear Madam, take it from me, no Man . . . is more dreadful than a Poet

WYCHERLEY *Love in a Wood* (1672)

—take the air. Go about one's business; get out.—to take a breath or a long  
breath. To rest after especial effort or strain; pause in one's labors for the purpose  
of restoring energy.—to take (a drop) too much. To drink to excess; to drink to  
the point of intoxication.—to take after. 1. To resemble in characteristics, habits,  
etc.; be like. 2. To follow as an example

(1) Thank God, you take after your mother's family, Arthur GEORGE ELIOT

(2) His followers all take after him in this particular HEYLIN *Ecclesia Vind.*  
3. To pursue; run after.—to take a leaf out of one's or the same book. To take  
example or pattern from.

It is a great pity that some of our instructors in more important matters will not  
take a leaf out of the same book HUGHES *Tom Brown at Oxford* I, II, 32

—to take a shine to. To take a liking to; to try to make oneself agreeable to.

I've tuk a shine to you, and don't want to see your neck broke.

T WINTHROP *John Brent* 17

—to take back. To withdraw or retract

"I've disgusted you, I see that; but I didn't mean to I—I take it back."

"Oh, there's nothing to take back," said Corey W. D. HOWELLS *Silas Lapham* XV.

—to take by storm. 1. [Military] To capture by assault or forcing defenses  
2. To fascinate or captivate completely; make a remarkably favorable impression on

—to take down. 1. To write down; make a record of. 2. To gulp down; swallow. 3.  
To disjoint, take apart, or pull to pieces, as a scaffolding 4. To humble. 5. To get  
ahead of; as, a boy takes down another in his class 6. [Austral.] To cheat.

(1) Reporters would take down the speeches C H EDEN G. *Donnington* I, xii, 240.

(2) I will take down poison, Eat burning coals, do anything.

B. JONSON *Volpone* act iii, sc. 1.

(4) Whatever takes down a young man's conceit must be profitable to him.

MAURICE *Epistle of St John* I. 4.

—to take hold of. 1. To seize with the hand; grasp 2. To take possession; get control—this idea took strong hold of him. 3. To take or share in management.

(1) [She] fell on her knees . . . taking hold of the skirt of his coat

SHEBBEARE *Matrimony* II, 193

(2) A sense of her bitter bereavement took hold of her

M. GRAY *Reproach Annesley* III, vii.

(3) No, I only capt—took hold of the "Blue M" freighters—Morgan and McQuade's old line—this summer

KIPLING *Captains Courageous* IX.

—to take home to oneself. To understand completely, to grasp the personal meaning—to take ill. 1. To be offended at or angered by. 2. To become sick.

—to take in. 1. To give entrance to, admit, receive, as, to take in a new member. 2. To undertake the doing of something; as, to take in washing 3. To receive into the mind, understand 4. To lessen the size or amount of, contract; in seamanship, to brail, furl 5. To include, as in scope or reach, embrace; comprehend; 6. To fence in, enclose 7. To accept as truth, as, he took in the whole yarn. 8. To dupe; as, I was badly taken in 9. [Brit.] To receive regularly, as a newspaper or other periodical.

(1) He hath taken in all the antient Church writers into his catalogue.

HAMMOND *Power of Keys* III, 23.

(3) Sluggish minds require time to take in new notions

BARING-GOULD *Gaverocks* III, li, 140.

(8) Nobody shall ever take me in again to do such an absurd and wicked thing.

LANDOR *Imaginary Conversations, Works* II, 228.

—to take in good part. To receive good naturedly; hear with good grace. I will just add one little word, Utterson, that I'm sure you'll take in good part. This is a private matter, and I beg of you to let it sleep

R. L. STEVENSON *Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

—to take in hand. To assume charge of, take under one's consideration or care.

—to take it out of. 1. To exact penalty or satisfaction from 2. To reduce the strength or freshness of.

I take it out of him on the spot I give him a jolly good hiding

MAYHEW *London Labour* I, 31, 1851

Rome . . . takes the splendor out of all this sort of thing elsewhere

HAWTHORNE *French and Italian Notebooks* II, 68.

—to take off. 1. To remove from something 2. To carry away 3. To amputate; as, to take off a finger. 4. To kill, as, a pestilence took off thousands. 5. To deduct; repeal. 6. To mimic; burlesque, as, to take off a queer character. 7. To swallow down at once, as a glass of liquor. 8. To decrease, as tides, from the spring-tide

9. To set off; spring

(1) A cannon ball took off his head.

STEELE *Tatler* No. 5

(5) He pleased the people greatly by taking off a heavy tax.

M. J. GUEST *Lectures on Eng Hist* XIV, 127

(6) He has been taken off by a thousand authors; but never really imitated by any of them

CHESTERFIELD *Letters* III, 85.

—to take on. 1. To be greatly agitated; go on madly (about), make a fuss (over), rage or rave (about) 2. To engage, as help; take service with; enlist.

(1) He took on like a demented man.

GALT *Laurie T.* I, ix.

(2) I am engaged to take on with Miss Lydy.

FOOTE *Trip to Calais* II, 377.

If you take on to be a soldier

SMOLLETT *Rod. Random* xvi.

—to take one down a peg. To lower one in his own estimation or in that of others by subjecting him to some defeat or humiliation

I must take that proud girl down a peg.

MRS HUMPHRY WARD *Marcella* II, 324.

—to take oneself off. 1. To go away. 2. To commit suicide.

(1) He . . . took himself off on tiptoe

DICKENS *Oliver Twist* xxiv.

(2) Ptolemy of Cyprus . . . took himself off by poison.

LANGHORNE *Plutarch* (1879) II, 828/2.

—to take pepper in the nose. To take offense; become angry

Having taken Pepper in the Nose, he was lugging out his Sword.

RABELAIS in *Motteux's* transl IV, v.

—to take possession. To enter into the occupancy of; hold for one's own or in one's control; seize.—to take stock in. To have confidence; to believe in a thing strongly enough to invest in it. Frequently used with a negative and having nullify-

ing force.—to take the say. To taste food or drink before it is served to prove that it is free from poison.

Nor deem it meet that you to him convey  
The proffered bowl, unless you taste the say.

ROSE Orlando Furioso xxi, 61.

—to take the shine off or out of. To outdo; outshine; surpass, outwit, put in the shade.

The cares of the world . . . take the shine out of us LOVER Handy Andy xxi.

—to take the wall of. To get the better of, have the advantage from passing, as in a street, on the side nearest the wall which is considered the safest side.—to take the wind out of one's sails. To run foul of, to spoil the sport of; to put a damper upon one's energy or enterprise. Originally a nautical phrase—to take to. 1. To devote or apply oneself to.

She has taken to society as a duck takes to water. Scribner's Magazine Aug, 1893.

2. To develop affection for

I took to him for his resemblance to you. WALPOLE Correspondence II, 293.

—to take to one's bed. To be sick or ill.—to take to the road. To become a highwayman —to take up. 1. To raise or lift 2. To take into custody, arrest 3. To receive on or into, as a vehicle; as, to take up passengers 4. To remove by some tightening process; as, to take up the slack of a rope; to take up the superfluous motion or play of a machine 5. To catch up and secure, as a dropped stitch or an artery 6. To begin; as, to take up a wailing 7. To take possession of according to the method prescribed by law, as public land, as, to take up a farm 8. To pay, as a note, mortgage, or other obligation 9 To accept according to the proposed terms; as, to take up a bet 10. To accept the proposal of, as, he took me up 11. To reprove or criticize; as, to take one up on account of a remark 12. To take onto one's patronage or care. 13. To pay in full for stock bought on margin and have one's name put on the certificates.

(1) Take her up tenderly

Lift her with care.

HOOD Bridge of Sighs.

(3) We should not criticise the animal (elephant) which kneels to take us up

SCOTT Count Robert XIII.

(12) When the Countess of Fitz-Willis . . . takes up a person he or she is safe

THACKERAY Vanity Fair I.I.

—to take upon oneself. To assume moral responsibility for, to charge oneself with an office or duty

Helen took the blame upon herself Century Magazine XXVI, 608

—to take up with. [Brit.] To court, consort or associate with, seek the society of. If you cannot marry her you won't care to take up with another

MISS E. MONEY Dutch Maiden 329

—to take water. [U S.] To withdraw from one's position, confess the error of one's ways; weaken; back down.

taken up. 1. Wholly engrossed, absorbed, engaged or interested in.

She is taken up with making her husband comfortable.

HARRIET MARTINEAU Hull and Valley V, 76

His business takes him up altogether

MRS H. WARD D. Grieve II, VII.

2. [Eng.] Put under arrest; taken in.

taking, in a fine, terrible, etc. In a fine, terrible, etc., passion, agitation, excitement, mental disturbance.

By this time your Mother is in a fine taking. ETHEREDGE Man of Mode III, 111.

takings. Receipts.

Some needy shopkeeper who surveys his every-day takings.

MASSINGER City Madam act ii, sc 1.

Talbot House. [Brit.] A soldiers' club founded at Poperinghe, Flanders, in 1915, and named for Gilbert Talbot, killed in action at Hooge.

Because over its entrance it bore the maxim "Abandon rank all ye who enter here," the club became the symbol of service brotherhood that sprang directly out of a brotherhood of sacrifice and has built up a fellowship that sinks all differences of rank and opinion. Commonly referred to as Toc. H.

M. P. G. LEONARD in The Yorkshire Observer, Feb. 3, 1923, p. 10, col. 1.



**tale, a Canterbury.** A traditional story or historical narrative designed to amuse or to preserve the details of an event; hence, a thing of the past; a "chestnut."

If we take it for a *Canterbury tale*,  
Why do we not refuse it?

CRANMER *Sermon, On Rebellion, Works* II, 198.

**tale, in the same.** In the same class or story; also, in agreement.

The Wesleyan missionary is *in the same tale* with the Jesuit.

LANG *Myths, Ritual and Religion* II, 333.

**talent, the.** 1. Persons of ability collectively: sometimes with a qualifying word.

Clarendon seems to have taken a morose pleasure in provoking all the rising *talent* of the kingdom

MACAULAY *Essays, Temple* p. 452

2. [Sporting Cant.] Patrons of the race-track who bet, as opposed to book-makers and touts.

By the sporting press, applied to backers of horses as distinguished from the layers or bookmakers, the implication being that those whose investments make a horse a favourite are supposed to be "the clever ones."

SIR JAMES A. H. MURRAY *New Eng. Dict.* vol. ix, p. 54.

**tale of a tub.** A cock and bull story; fabulous tale; idle history; fiction; falsehood; nonsense; absurdity.

Thys is a fair *tale of a tubbe* tolde us of hys electes.

MORE *Confutacyon of Tyndale's Answers* (1532).

Having entertained the fellow with a *tale of a tub*.

DE FOE *Memoirs of a Cavalier* 97.

**tale of Robin Hood.** A tradition or thing that exists only in story; a mere tale; an idle narrative; a fiction as distinguished from a fact.

This is a *tale* indeed of *Robinhood*, which to belevee, might show my wits but weake.

HARINGTON *Orlando Furioso* XLV, cv.

**talk** occurs in a few idiomatic phrases such as the following:—**tail talk.**

Extravagant talk, highfalutin.

Public men who *talk tall* about the sacredness of labour. KERNAN *Scoundrels* XV.

—**to talk a person's head off.** To bore one with too much talk; to talk excessively.

—**to talk big.** To indulge in boastful language —**to talk black in the face.** To

talk to death —**to talk Double-Dutch, gibberish, Greek, Hebrew, etc.** To speak

in unintelligible language —**to talk down.** To silence or suppress by outspeaking

another —**out-talk —to talk down to.** To suit one's discourse to the mental level of

one's audience —**to talk into.** To persuade or convince by pleading, argument, or

discussion —**to talk one deaf, dumb, and blind.** To carry on a ceaseless flow of

speech so as to deafen and bewilder the person spoken to —**to talk out.** To discuss

to the end, consider thoroughly —**to talk out of.** To so affect by discussion as to

dissuade one from (a preconceived course or plan) —**to talk over.** 1. To persuade; convince

2. To discuss, consider together; as, a meeting *to talk over* the plan.

He *was talked over* by Prince Maurice, whom, unless he meant to be *talked over*,

he had had no occasion to meet. LATHAM *Channel Islands* III, xvi, 377.

—**to talk shop.** To talk about matters relating to one's own profession or business.

—**to talk through one's hat.** [U. S.] To talk above one's head; hence, to indulge in

vain boasts or promises; to talk foolishly; resort to braggadocio. —**to talk to death.**

To talk ceaselessly so as to weary one to the point of exhaustion. —**to talk to a post.**

To talk to deaf ears —**to talk turkey.** [U. S.] 1. To talk business; discuss seriously.

An Indian and a white man, after a day's hunting, had only a turkey and a partridge

to show for game. The white man proposed to divide them, and said to the Indian,

"Take your choice. You can have the partridge, and I'll take the turkey; or I'll

take the turkey and you may have the partridge." "Ugh!" said the Indian, "you don't

*talk turkey* to me." BARTLETT *Americanisms* 691.

2. To talk pleasantly, in an ingratiating manner.

—**to talk United States.** To speak in the vernacular of the American people.

Englishmen who have visited America will remember their gratification at being invited to *talk United States*. *The Daily Chronicle*, London, Feb. 12, 1903, p. 3  
—to **talk up**. 1. To speak out; state what one means or wishes. 2. To praise; extol with a view to promoting the interests of.

Clever talkers are kept . . . to *talk up* the patients to the highest possible fee  
*The Westminster Gazette* Mar 6, 1900, p. 9

**Tammany**. [U. S.] 1. A friendly chief of the Delaware tribe of Indians: an Anglicized form of *Tamanend*. 2. The Tammany Society.

—**Tammany Society**. A political organization in New York City affiliated with the Democratic party more commonly **Tammany Hall**, from its meeting-place. The Tammany Society, instituted April 30, 1789, was originally called the "Columbian Order," with Columbus as its patron saint. A few years later it adopted as its "patron saint" the Indian chief *Tamanend* (see above), who was a contemporary of William Penn. An apocryphal history of *Tamanend* asserts that he lived during the Revolutionary War, was a friend of Washington, and died on the 12th of May. His name became popular under the corrupted form of *Tammany* or *Saint* (or *King*) *Tammany*. The society, originally nominally charitable and social, became in time political.

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dict.* p. 2462

Founded May 12, 1789, a few weeks after George Washington's inauguration as first president of the United States by a group of prominent citizens under the leadership of William Mooney as a patriotic and benevolent institution

Dedicated to the perpetuation of the principles contained in the American Declaration of Independence

Following Indian Tribal customs in its organization, thirteen Sachems, typifying the original states, were elected annually, and selected a Grand Sachem, which title was also customarily bestowed upon the President of the United States. Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and Jackson were thus honored

Tammany is an association of citizens united under one banner, representing Democratic principles, the application of which to governmental affairs they believe to be most beneficial to the people. *Plain Facts About Tammany*, New York, 1920

—**Tammanyite**. A member of the Tammany Society or an adherent to its political principles

**tan, to kiss the**. In horsemanship, especially in cavalry barracks, to be thrown.—to **smell of the tan**. [Slang.] To smack or savor of the circus or the ring.

**tandem**. In single file: said of two or more horses so harnessed and driven; hence, a vehicle to which horses are so harnessed—usually a dogcart. From the Latin *tandem*, at length.

**tangent, to go off or wander away at a**. To take suddenly a divergent or an erratic or eccentric course, as in thought or actions.

John Treverton, smoking his cigar, and letting his thoughts *wander away at a tangent* every now and then  
M E BRADDON *Cloven Foot* X.

**tanglefoot, tangleleg**. Whisky or other intoxicating drink.

**tank**. I. *v*. To enclose or store in a tank. II. *n*. 1. A large vessel or receptacle for holding a fluid. 2. [Recent.] An armored car propelled by motor-power with caterpillar tractor and mounted with guns. 3. A hard drinker. 4. [Prov.] Any natural pool or pond.

**tanner**. [Brit.] A sixpenny-piece.

**tansy, like a**. To perfection; in such a way that it can not be done better or improved on: from a favorite dish of the 17th century. See quotation.

Look . . . is it not well mended?  
Ay, this is something *like a tansy*.

SWIFT *Polite Conversations* I, 89.

A curious *tansie*, the new way.—Take about a dozen new-laid eggs, beat them up with three pints of cream, strain them through a coarse linen cloth, and put in of the

strained juices of endive, spinach, sorrel, and *tansie*, of each three spoonfuls; half a grated nutmeg, four ounces of fine sugar, a little salt and rose-water, put it with a slight laying of butter under it, into a shallow pewter dish, and bake it in a moderately heated oven: scrape over it loaf sugar, sprinkle rose water, and serve it up.

*The Closet of Rarities* 1706

**Tantalus cup, draught, etc.** Phrases in allusion to Tantalus who according to Greek mythology, for revealing the secrets of the Gods, was condemned to stand in Tartarus up to his chin in water, with branches of fruit hanging above him. Both fruit and water receded from his lips.

The *tantalus* is a stand of decanters which can only be used by touching a secret spring.—**Tantalus cup.** A cup containing the figure of a man in whose body is concealed a siphon that prevents a fluid poured into the cup from ever reaching the man's mouth

The *Tantalus-draught* escaped our thirsty lips.

*Edinburgh Review* July, 1908.

It seems like our cup of *Tantalus*; we are never to reach it.

KANE *Grinnell Expedition* 391.

**tantivy.** [Brit.] I. *adv.* Hastily or hurriedly and in a bustle; with a violent rush or dash. II. *v.* To hasten or hurry off; chase; rush.

He is the merriest man alive, up at five a' clock in the morning . . . and *tantivy* all the country over.

*Brome Jovial Crew* IV, i.

III. *n.* 1. One given to the chase or hunting with hounds, specifically, a fox-hunting parson.

An ambitious *tantivy*, missing of his towering hopes of preferment in Ireland.

*Swift Journal to Stella* XXXII.

2. A volley of words especially in reproach; invective.

Sir, I expected to hear from you in the language of the lost groat, and the prodigal son, and not in such a *tantivy* of language; but I perceive your communication is not always, yea, yea

JOHN CLEVELAND *Reply to Parliament Officer, Works*, p. 93.

3. A hurry, rush, tear.

Poor soul! All upon the *tantivy* again.

COLLEY CIBBER *Refusal* iv.

**tantony.** A petted favorite; a servile follower: from the smallest pig in a litter and therefore the favorite. A contraction of *St. Anthony* who was the patron saint of swineherds.

Lord! she made me follow her last week through all the shops like a *tantony pig*.

*Swift Polite Convers.* I

**tantrum.** A display of ill-humor or a petulant fit of passion; ill-natured caprice: often in the plural.

An author who was always in a *tantrum* if interrupted

WASHINGTON IRVING *Tales of a Traveller*, I, 217.

**tap, on.** Ready for immediate use; available; in sight; on view.

Who is he that has eloquence always *on tap*?

LOWELL Biglow *Papers*, Series II, 54.

—to **tap the admiral.** To draw (liquor) from a cask using a gimlet to bore a hole and inserting a straw through which the liquor is sucked: a practise credited to British seamen who tapped a rum-cask on board a warship

**tap a till.** [Eng.] To rob a money-drawer.

**tap a wire.** [U. S.] To divert some part of the current of an electric telephone or telegraph so as to enable the person so doing to intercept a communication.

By *tapping the wire* for a message from Guttenburg the operator could interrupt communication with all three.

*The New York Tribune* Jan. 15, 1892.

**tapis.** [F.] Carpet or table-cloth: used especially in the phrase, **on the tapis**. 1. On the table-cloth; that is up for discussion or consideration.

Lord Churchill and Lord Godolphin went away, and gave no votes in the matter which was upon the *tapis*.

CLARENDON *Diary*, May 2, 1690.

**2.** On the carpet; that is, up for questioning, as in examination or investigation.

I had been trying to bring Lucilla on the tapis. HANNAH MORE *Celebs* II, xxxiv, 128.

**taps.** [U. S.] A military signal sounded on a bugle, fifteen minutes after tattoo, at which all lights in quarters are to be extinguished. It is sounded also over the grave of a dead soldier.

The customary volleys were fired over the grave, and Bugler Fitzgerald sounded taps, the soldier's last sad farewell. *The Cambridge Tribune* [Mass.] Jan. 10, 1891, p. 8

**taps, to be on one's.** [U. S.] To be actively at work, as one continuously on his feet.

**tar.** A sailor: so called from his use of tar to calk or seal the seams between the planks of a ship.

**tar and feather.** [U. S.] To smear with tar and then cover with feathers: originated by ordinance of Richard I of England in 1189 as a penalty for theft in the navy.

Mr John Malcomb, an officer of the customs at Boston, who was tarred and feathered, and led to the gallows with a rope about his neck

*Annual Register* 1774, *Chronology*, p. 127

**tar-brush, to have a lick, touch, or dash of the.** To show a trace of Negro or Indian blood in the complexion: said of both sexes.

Brunette! I should rather think she is! There's a strong touch of the tar-brush in that quarter.

TREVELYAN *Competition Wallah*, 198.

The mother must have been very fair, if she were a native, the boy is so very slightly touched with the tar-brush

LANG *Wanderings in India* 50.

**Tar-heel.** [U. S.] A native of South Carolina.

**tarradiddle.** [Brit.] I. *n.* A hoax or fairy-story; a yarn or fib; a petty lie.

II. *v.* To impose upon or deceive by petty lies.

**tarred with the same brush or stick.** Marred by the same peculiarities; possessing the same faults.

**Tartarin.** A bombastic loquacious person: in allusion to *Tartarin* of Tarascon, an entertaining and bombastic Gascon created by Alphonse Daudet in his novel of the same name.

There are too many loquacious *Tartarins* abroad without the engaging ways of the man of Tarascon

*Blackwood's Magazine*, May 1905, 643

**Tartarus.** In classical mythology: (1) The fabled place of punishment in the lower world, the abode of all who suffer eternal punishment—an abyss as far below Hades as earth is below heaven. (2) The son of Æther and Ge (Gæa), personifying this place of punishment.

**task, to bring or take one to.** To find fault with; reprove; lecture.

My employer took me severely to task

DOYLE *Captain of the Polestar* 105

**taste.** I. To have a limited experience or knowledge of; use sparingly.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.

BACON *Works, Essays, Of Studies* in vol. 1, p. 301

**2.** To have experience of, whether much or little; pleasant or painful;

know by experiencing; as, in a long and active life he had tasted pain and pleasure

**3.** To test, as timber, by boring or cutting into

**4.** [Poet.] To smell.

**5.** To impart a relish to; give a flavor to.

**6.** To have a relish for; like.

**7.** To prove or try by touching; touch; hence, to test in general.

**8.** To perceive or recognize intellectually; as, to taste a deceit or falsehood.

**9.** To have carnal knowledge of. SHAKESPEARE *Cymbeline* act ii, sc. 4.

—**taste of.** To feel or experience; have knowledge of; as the population had tasted of oppression.—**taste the lips of.** To kiss.

**tatterdemalion.** A ragged fellow: ragamuffin.

A group of young *tatterdemalions* playing pitch and toss.

HOLMES *Autocrat of the Breakf. Table* XI, 108

**Taunton turkey.** [U. S.] A herring: from the fact that large catches of the fish are made off Taunton, Mass.

Our fisheries o'er the world are famed,  
The mackerel, shad, and cod!

And Taunton turkeys are so thick  
We sell them by the rod!

ALLIN *Yankee Ballad*

**taw.** A large fancy marble.—to come to taw. To do what one is bound by duty to do; to toe the line; to come to scratch: from the game of marbles, in which the taw is the straight line from which the player makes his opening shot

**tawdry.** I. *n.* Cheap but showy finery. II. *a.* Ignorantly fine: a debased use of the word which originally meant fine, trim, elegant.

(I) A poor bedizened creature clad in *tawdry*. SMILES *Huquenots Eng.* 349

(II) Come, you promised me a *tawdry* lace, and a pair of sweet Gloves

SHAKESPEARE *Winter's Tale* act IV, sc. 4

**teach one's grandmother to suck eggs.** See under GRANDMOTHER.

**tea-fight.** A social gathering at which tea is served; a tea party, muffin-worry.

"Kind of a *tea-fight*," he returns . . . I looked to Tilda . . . "Come to tea next Sunday," says the girl

WHITEING *John Street* VI.

**tear.** I. *n.* A boisterous jollification or violent spree. II. *v.* To rant, move, act or speak violently; to fume and rage.

I could play Eracles rarely, or a part to *tear* a cat in.

SHAKESPEARE *Midsummer Night's Dream* act I, sc. 2.

**tear about or around.** [U. S.] To rush about impetuously.

*Tearin' round 'nough* to drive the house out o' the winders STOWE *Oldtown* 525.

**teaser.** Something perplexing or difficult.

**teens.** Numbers having names ending in *-teen*; especially, the years of one's age designated by these numbers.

Her daughter, who was by this time come into the *teens*.

E. W., *Life Donna Rosina* 10.

Your friendship for me is now getting into its *teens*. KEATS *Letters, Works* III, 101.

**teeth, armed to the.** Completely armed.

Everybody in Spain travels *armed to the teeth*.

FORD *Handbook Spain* I, xi.

**teeth, as scarce as hens'.** As rare as that which does not exist, for hens have no teeth.

**teeth, in spite of one's.** In defiance of, or in spite of one's opposition to.

[We] will go one with the Lawsuit *in spite of* John Bull's *teeth* ARBUTHNOT *John Bull*

**teeth, to show one's.** To prepare to attack; threaten; snarl.

Such patriotism as snarls dangerously and shows *teeth*

CARLYLE *French Revolution* II, i, 1.

**teetotal.** [U. S.] Total abstinence from alcoholic drink. The origin of the word is in dispute and is claimed for Richard Turner of Preston, England, September 1833, but the Rev. Joel Jewell, in the Century Dictionary, claims that in 1815 members of a temperance society organized at Hector, N. Y., pledged themselves to abstain from distilled spirits only, but in Jan. 1827, another pledge bound all signers to total abstinence. The two classes were distinguished by the initials O. P. (Old Pledge) and T. (Total): T-total. This claim lacks contemporary support.

The *teetotal* movement had been founded some years earlier by the Quakers of Cork, but it took no hold on the people till Theobald Mathew, a young Capuchin friar joined it in 1838. WILLIAM STEPHENSON GREGG *Irish History for English Readers* p. 143.

**tell** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases as the following:—**all told**.

Every one reckoned or enumerated; in all.—**to be telling**. To be worth or be to the advantage of (one)

It would *have been telling* me a ten-pound note [if I had acted on the advice]

H. JOHNSTON *Chronicle of Glenbuckie* VII, 80

—**to tell down, out, or in one's hands**. To pay in coin by counting piece by piece as put down. Also, **to tell in gold**.

*Tell down* with all speed an hundred crowns

SCOTT *Iranhoe* XXXIII

Biddlecombe drew a bag from his pocket and told the money out *in gold*

W. RAYMOND *Gentleman Upcott's Daughter* II

—**to tell noses**. To count the number of persons present

Nor think yourself secure in doing wrong

By *telling noses* with a party strong

SWIFT *To Gay* 60

—**to tell off**. 1. To count or reckon; as, he *told off* the sacks on his fingers

The troops were told-off into the boats.

MARRIAT *Dog-Friend* 1.

2. To assign, as for a particular duty

A constable had been *told off* to watch the defendant.

*The Guardian* July 23, 1890, 1159

—**to tell on or upon**. To be effective; to make an impression; to be of weight

Going . . . at a pace . . . that began to *tell upon* the horses.

SIR R. H. ROBERTS *In the Shires* II, 32

—**to tell one's beads**. To recite prayers, checking them off by the beads of a rosary. Five hundred have I *told upon these beads*

B. TAYLOR *Deukalion* II, i, 53

—**to tell tales out** (formerly *forth*) of school. To tell publicly that which is not for the public; reveal secrets disloyally —**to tell the truth and shame the devil**.

To avoid prevarication —**to tell the world**. To publish abroad —**to tell years**.

To have lived (as many) years as numbered

Thou hadst *told* but thy tenth year.

LYTTON *Rienzi* I, IV

**telltale**. 1. A person who reveals personal or secret matters. 2. A device that discloses something or indicates a condition or fact not otherwise known; an indicator.

**tempest in a teacup or teapot**. A great fuss or disturbance over a trifling matter; a much ado about nothing.

For all that, his sympathies had been entirely with her in the recent squabble "What a ridiculous little *storm in a tea-cup* it was!" he thought with a laugh

*Murray's Magazine* 1887

**tenderfoot**. [U. S.] A greenhorn; a newcomer; an inexperienced miner or rancher.

Hunters . . . who bedizen themselves in all the traditional finery of the craft in the hope of getting a job at guiding some *tenderfoot*

ROOSEVELT *Hunting Trips* 32.

**Tenderloin**. [U. S.] A choice cut of beef next the porterhouse (q.v.); hence, a police precinct in which most of the hotels, theaters, gambling houses, etc., are situated: first so applied by Police Captain Alexander Williams of New York to a region lying between West 23d and West 34th Street of that city.

**ten strike**. [U. S.] A complete success, a sweeping victory: from the game of tenpins, in which it is possible to knock over the whole triangle of pins with one ball.

**tenter-hooks, to be on**. To be in a state of painful suspense, anxious state.

I left him *upon the tenter-hooks* of impatient uncertainty.

SMOLLETT *Roderick Random* XLV.

**terms, to be on**. To be in relations with. The phrase is often combined with such qualifying words as *good, friendly, close, equal, speaking, visiting, intimate*, etc.

There never was a time when our folks were on *speaking terms* with these yeomen.

R. BUCHANAN *God and Man* I, 211.

I could live upon *good terms* even with a Deist; provided he keeps within the Bounds of Decency

L. TEMPLE *Sketches* 64.

**terms, to come to.** To strike a bargain, agree on conditions.

The creditors rather than to contest accounts, *came to terms*, and agreed to take shares.

NORTH *Lives* II, 231.

**tether, the end, extent, or length of one's.** The limits of one's resources or sphere of action; the radius of one's field of labor.

At length she got to the end of her tether, and I began

MALKIN *Gil Blas* X, ii, 8

They had got to the length of their tether.

STUBBS *Lectures, European History* I, ii, 23.

**Texas deck.** [U. S.] The third deck of a river steamer.

The boiler deck, the hurricane deck, and the *Texas deck*, are fenced and ornamented with clean white railings

MARK TWAIN *Old Times*.

**thanks to.** In consequence of, as a result of, because of: sometimes use in the negative, meaning no credit to, not because or by reason or virtue of.

But (*thanks to* Homer) since I live and thrive,

Indebted to no Prince or Peer alive.

POPE *Epistles of Horace* II, ii, 68.

No thanks to any laws which have been made to that purpose

PETTY *Political Arithmetic* VI, 99.

**thé dansant.** [F.] An afternoon entertainment where tea is served and dancing takes place.

**thick and thinnite.** [Brit.] One who supports a policy regardless of the consequences: the English equivalent of the American *standpatter*.

I felt as if I were before this speech tarred with the brush of being a *thick and thinnite*.

A J BALFOUR *Speech at Manchester*, Jan. 9, 1900.

**thick-skinned.** Not sensitive to criticism nor easily rebuked.

He would be *thick-skinned* if he stands the clamour.

SCOTT *Journal*, June 26, 1825.

**thimble-rig.** A gambling game common to the race-track and consisting of hiding a pea under one of three thimbles or shells, or pretending to do so, and betting that no one present can find the pea: known in the U. S. as the **shell-game**. Used also as a verb.

The explanation of these experts is usually only clever *thimble-rigging*.

JOHN BURROUGHS *Century Mag.* xvii, 926.

**thing.** A living creature viewed with admiration or tenderness, pity or contempt: used with many qualifying words, as **old thing**, a familiar form of address in Great Britain; **poor thing**, an object of compassion; **sweet or dear thing**, phrases of endearment, **mean thing**, a term of reproach; **yon thing**, or **thing of a man** a phrase of contempt

**thing, the.** 1. That which is correct or proper, needful or fashionable.

2. What is especially necessary; the important point.

The question (of a state church) . . . is . . . so absolutely unimportant! *The thing is*, to recast religion.

MATTHEW ARNOLD *Lit. and Dogma*, Pref. ii

*The thing* about Michel Angelo is this: he is not . . . at the head of a class, he stands apart by himself

SYMONDS *Michel Angelo* I, vi, 10, 290.

3. Up to the mark; in good health; fit; as, "I am not quite *the thing* this morning."

**things.** Belongings, especially clothes.

Ruffs and farthingales and *things*

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act iv, sc. 3.

**thingamy, thingumajig, thingumbob, thingummy.** A thing: used to stand for its proper name and applied indifferently to any person or thing.

He would answer to what "you may call um?" or "What was his name?" But especially "*Thingum-a-jig*," LEWIS CARROLL *Hunting of the Snark* I, ix.

**think better of.** 1. To change one's opinion or purpose. 2. To reconsider or change, as one's resolve.

The enemy's general *thought better of it*—beat a retreat *The Examiner* Sept. 21, 1812.

**think, I don't.** The opposite of a thought expressed is to be understood: used usually in making ironical statements. See quotation.

"You're a amiably-disposed young man, sir, *I don't think*," resumed Mr. Weller, in a tone of moral reproof. DICKENS *Pickwick* XXXVIII

**think no end of a person or thing.** [Brit.] To have a very high opinion of; to be greatly attached to.

**think nothing of.** To have a poor opinion of; to value lightly; to rate as worthless.

A pint of wine in two hours is *thought nothing of* BEDDOES *Hygeia* VIII, 76.  
The lady thanked him . . . but said she *thought nothing of* the walk  
HOLMES *Poet at Breakfast Table V*

**think up.** [U. S.] To evolve, invent, compose or formulate as the result of thought.

I believe she is *thinking up* another poem. Century XXIX, 350.

**thin-skinned.** Sensitive; easily hurt or offended; oversensitive.

Erasmus . . . was *thin-skinned* as ever FROUDE *Life and Letters of Erasmus* xviii.

**this is too much.** The limit of patience has been reached; the time has come to call a halt. Used also as in quotation.

*This* (to use a very colloquial phrase) is surely *too much* of a good thing  
SYDNEY SMITH *Works* I, 175

**Thomas.** 1. A serving-man or waiter. 2. [Biblical.] A doubter; an unbelieving person: in allusion to "Thomas, one of the twelve, called Dydimus," who refused to believe Christ had risen from the dead until he put his finger into the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side.

Jesus saith unto him, *Thomas*, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed. blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed John XX, 29  
Doubting *Thomas*es, who will only believe what they see, must wait awhile  
Harper's Magazine June, 1893, p. 93

**Thomas Atkins.** [Brit.] The British private soldier: from the use of this name as a specimen name in the official regulations in 1815.

Description, service, etc., of *Thomas Atkins*, private No. 6 Troop, 6th Regt. Dragoons Where born . . . Parish of Odiham, Hants . . . Bounty £6 Received, *Thomas Atkins* his X mark. Clothing account of *Thomas Atkins*, etc. *Thomas Atkins* has been a well conducted soldier: was wounded at ———, and has distinguished himself by several acts of bravery. Signed ———, Commanding Officer.

War Office Collection of Orders, Regulations, etc. Aug. 31, 1815.

**thorn-back.** [Brit.] An old maid: from an old name for the ray or skate, a British food-fish.

After 25, young ladies were called "*thorn-backs*" by the much marrying Puritans of New England. The Daily News London, Mar. 14, 1898.

**thorn in the flesh.** A cause of continual trouble or irritation.

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelation I should be exalted above measure 2 Corinthians XII, 7

**thorns, to sit, stand, or tread on.** To be in a state of painful anxiety or suspense.

I shall sit all on thorns till that matter takes effect. JEFFERIE *Bugbears*, III, ii.



**thread.** One of various elements interwoven in mental, moral, political, or social life.

The only *threads* of light in the dark web of his history are clerical and theurgic

KINGSLEY *Miscellanea* II, ii, 29.

—to **take up** or **resume the thread** of. To carry on or begin again, as a discussion, and continue —**thread of destiny.** The events of life as ruled by the Fates according to Greek and Roman mythology

**three tailors of Tooley Street.** See under **TAILORS.**

**through thick and thin.** Under all conditions; steadfastly; resolutely, without regard to obstacles.

There's five hundred men here ready to back you up *through thick and thin.*

HALL CAINE *Manzman* V, vi

**through, to be.** 1. [U. S.] To have finished, as a meal; to have completed, as a task. 2. [Brit.] To have one's connection by telephone complete.

**through with, to be.** [U. S.] To have nothing further to do with.

**throw** is used in various senses in the following terms:—**not a word to throw to a dog.** Nothing whatever to say to one.

You haven't a *word to throw to a dog*

FRANCIS FRANDER'S *Widow* II, v

**throw-down.** [U. S.] To repudiate or reject; abandon, discard. Also, give away; betray —**throw-back.** A reversion to type: said of an animal or plant in which some ancestral characteristic is exhibited

She is personally a *throw-back* to an angel

*The Athenæum* London, No. 3229, 351.

—to **be** or **get thrown back.** To suffer a relapse, as in sickness. —to **be thrown on one's back.** To be completely upset, to suffer a check, be defeated; also, be laid up as through illness —to **throw a word to one as a bone to a dog.** To speak abruptly, sharply or brusquely to, to speak seldom or rudely to —to **throw it out.** To imply, suggest, insinuate, as, "He *threw it out* that he'd seen me intoxicated —to **throw it up.** To give up a task or resign, as a position —to **throw lots of dirt and some will stick.** To lie about a man profusely and some people will believe some of the lies —to **throw off.** To free oneself by force; to cast off or repudiate an associate; to repudiate or reject authority

He *throws off* his chancellorship at once

C E MAURICE S *Langton* I, 52.

—to **throw on.** To put on hurriedly; as, to *throw on* one's clothes. —to **throw one in one's calculations, plans, etc.** To spoil or upset one's schemes or arrangements —to **throw oneself at.** To show eager desire for attention or to please or captivate. said of a woman in regard to the opposite sex —to **throw oneself into the arms of.** To designedly seek the companionship of, put oneself in the way of. —to **throw oneself into.** To plunge into a task with energy, to undertake with zeal and energy —to **throw one's eye.** To direct one's gaze on. Sometimes also to **throw a glance or a look.** —to **throw on the town.** To be compelled to get parish relief —to **throw out of gear.** To put out of commission, render useless, disarrange or upset in mind or body —to **throw over.** To discard or abandon; desert

I was satisfied that Emma had *thrown me over.*

T. HOOK *G Gurney* II, 186.

They *threw over* their allies.

T. F. TOUT *History of England from 1689*, 27.

—to **throw the bride cake.** To toss over the head of a bride for luck some of the wedding-cake. See quotation.

When the bride returned from the church and had arrived at her new home, she was lifted down from her horse before the door and some cake was thrown over her head for luck. Sometimes the plate was also thrown along with the cake.

JOSEPH WRIGHT *Eng. Dialect Dict.* VI, 121.

—to **throw the cap up.** To quit work suddenly; take a holiday. See quotation. Ancient local custom prescribes that when reasons are urgent against working a cap shall be spun into the air, and if it stops up, work is resumed

*The Yorkshire Post* June 3, 1902

—to **throw the great cast.** To venture everything on a single throw of the dice; to take a step of vital importance.

In a word, George had *thrown the great cast.*

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* XXII.

—to **throw or drop the handkerchief.** To invite courtship, as from the ancient

practise of dropping one's handkerchief as a sign that the attentions of the one who picks it up are agreeable to the owner. A game based on this custom is played by children—to throw the handle after the blade. Same as to SEND THE AX AFTER THE HELVE (p. 19).

The question is, Will you at all better yourselves by . . . going to war with Russia for what she has done? Alas! my dear friend, this would be *throwing the handle after the blade* with a vengeance.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

—to throw the hatchet. To exaggerate; "draw the long bow"; i.e.—to throw the life up. To eject violently from the stomach; vomit. Also, to throw the stomach.—to throw together. 1. To build hurriedly; construct; to compile or collate hastily. 2. To bring together frequently, as, the young people were much thrown together.

(1) I could not forbear *throwing together* such reflections as occurred to me on that subject.

ADDISON *Spectator* 105

—to throw up. 1. To hoist or raise. 2. To erect hastily. 3. To relinquish, as, to throw up a situation or a contract. 4. To raise from the stomach and discharge, vomit. 5. To make prominent or distinct; project; cause to stand out.

(1) The chain of islands here laid down . . . may be considered as *thrown up* by some late volcanoes.

COKE *Russ. Disc.* 253

(2) The Greeks *threw up* a great Intrenchment to secure their Navy.

STEELE *Tatler*, No. 6.

(4) It is easy to judge of the Cause by the Substances which the patient *throws up*.

ARBUTHNOT *Rules of Diet*, III.

(5) The black folds of her dress *throwing up* the marble pallor of her face.

G. D. GALTON *La Fenton* VI

—to throw up one's hands. [U. S.] To make a sign of surrender: used sometimes imperatively. See quotation.

He was suddenly aware of a horse galloping rapidly up behind him, and heard a shout: "*Throw up your hands!*"

I. R. *Lady's Rancho Life Montana* 37

—to throw up the sponge. To give up; yield, admit defeat, as when a pugilist's second, by so doing, signals that his principal is down and out

**thug.** A ruffian; rough; a cut-throat or gunman. From the Hindustani *thag*, a robber or swindler.—**thuggery.** The sphere of activity of thugs.

Glasgow *Thuggery*, Glasgow *Thugs*; it is a witty nickname. CARLYLE *Chartism* I, 4

**thumb, rule of.** Measurement by the thumb; hence, any primitive method, roughly practical rather than scientific.

**thumb, under one's.** Under one's direction and control; wholly subservient to; in one's power.

She is obliged to be silent. I have her *under my thumb*.

RICHARDSON *Grandison* IV, xxix, 181

**thumbs up or down, to turn the.** To indicate approval or disapproval: in allusion to the Roman practise of turning thumbs up or down to indicate the fate of a defeated gladiator.

**thumper, thumping.** Something unusually large or great; anything impressive by reason of character, size, type, weight or quality.

One fault he had and that one was a *thumper*.

GOLDSMITH *Retaliation*

**thundering.** Unusually great; extreme; violent; tremendous; very large: used as a strong intensive.

What a *thundering* old fool you are!

BORROW *Lavengro* XCIX.

Such a *thundering* lie.

BARRETT *Tommy and Grizel* V.

**tick or ticket, on.** On credit, not paid for: from *ticket*, the old name for a tradesman's bill.

I am resolved to build no more sconces, but to pay my old *tickets*.

RANDOLPH *Hey for Honesty*.

Reduc'd to want, he in due time fell sick;

Was fain to die, and be interr'd on tick.

OLDHAM *Poems* 174.

**ticket, the.** 1. [Brit.] The correct thing; the fashionable; the expected.

Somehow she's not *the ticket*.

THACKERAY *The Newcomes* VII.

2. [U. S.] a list of candidates for office such as is printed under a party emblem on an official ballot, and used for voting.—**split ticket.** [U. S.] A ballot voted so as to show preference for candidates of opposed parties.—**straight ticket.** [U. S.] A ticket that presents the regular party nominations without addition or change.—**what's the ticket?** What is the plan or the idea?

"Well," said Bob Cross, "*what's the ticket* youngster—Are you going across with me?"

MARRYAT *Percival Keene*

**ticket of leave.** [Brit. Police Cant.] A release on parole or an order or permit given as a reward for good conduct to a prisoner before the expiration of sentence and restoring his liberty under certain restrictions.

**tickle one's or the fancy.** [Brit.] Afford amusement to; excite pleasure in; amuse; gratify.

**tickle to death.** [U. S.] Please to the height of sublime ecstasy; exhilarate by delightful surprise.

**tick off.** To check off after being tallied or cast up.

I compared each with the bill and *ticked it off*. DICKENS *Great Expectations* XXXIV.

**tide over.** To surmount or overcome a difficulty, as if by taking advantage of a favorable tide.

The transgressor has but to *tide over* a few years SEELEY *Ecce Homo* IV, 36

**tie-up.** [U. S.] A condition of suspension of operation or work.—**to tie**

**up.** [U. S.] To stop or prevent the operation or the work of something, either by accident or design; as, the traffic was *tied up* by the blizzard; the factory was *tied up* by the strike.

**tiger.** 1. [Brit.] (1) A liveried groom; also, an out-door boy servant.

When a boy he entered the service of Lord Barrymore as a "*tiger*," being the first of the class of servants known by that name.

W. H. HUCK in *Grove's Dictionary of Music*, Lee.

(2) A vulgar, overdressed person. (3) A rake, parasite, swell-mobsmen.

2. [U. S.] (1) A final shout to end a series of cheers. (2) The bank at faro or roulette. (3) A hand in poker consisting of two, three, four, five, and seven, not of the same suit.

**tile (or slate) loose, to have a.** To be mentally unhinged or slightly demented.

He's not right in the head, you know. *A tile loose.*

G. McDONALD *Back of the North Wind* XIX

Is he cracked? Has my cousin *dropped a tile*? BESANT AND RICE *Harp and Crown* IV.

**till, to tap the.** To steal from a till or cash-box; to rob the cash register.

There is generally a race to see who shall first *tap nature's till*.

Harper's Magazine Jan., 1886

**time** is used with various meanings in the following terms.—**at this time of day.** At this point or stage in any course or period; at so late a date.

I will not begin at *this time of day* to distress my tenants because they . . . can not make regular payments. SMOLLETT *Humphrey Clinker*

No man at *this time of day* pretends to maintain, etc.

GEN. P. THOMPSON in *Bradford Advertiser*, Mar. 15, 1862.

—**at times.** On various occasions; occasionally; now and then.—**behind the times.** Backward; not apace with the present; laggardly, unprogressive, not up-to-date.

—**for the time being.** For the moment or immediate present; for a particular season or occasion; temporarily.—**from time to time.** Now and then; occasionally; sometimes, or a succession of periods without intervals.

From thence proceeded *from time to time* the civil troubles of the Nation.

Heaven is theirs, saith David, that do justly *from tyme to tyme*.  
HOBBS *Leviathan* III, xl, 255.

*T WILSON Rhetoric* 14.  
—**in good time.** In due process of time; at a suitable or fitting period or date  
—**in no time.** At once; quickly; right away; without delay. Also intensified to  
**in less than no time**

Follow me and I will lead you to Finisterre *in no time*.

*In less than no time* you shall hear.  
BORROW *The Bible in Spain* xxix, 417

—**in time.** Seasonably; not too late, in course of time, sooner or later.  
JOWETT *Plato* I, 195

It will be too late to remedy it if not attended to *in time*. *Observ. Methodists* 4

—**on time.** [U. S.] Punctual; prompt.

He was faithful, and *on time* every morning MRS CUSTER *Tenting on the Plains* 359

—**time and again.** Repeatedly; very often; frequently

*Time and again* I thought John's love of you was near to madness.  
HALL CAINE *Christian* IV, xiv.

—**time out of mind or memory.** From a time beyond memory, from time  
immemorial.

The King's ordinary revenue is such as has either subsisted *time out of mind* in the  
crown; or else has been granted by parchment BLACKSTONE *Commentary* I, 8, 281

—**to have a good [or bad] time.** [U. S.] An old English phrase current from 1500  
to 1700 when it fell out of literary favor altho it was preserved in the provincial speech,  
and was freely used in America whence it returned to England and into favor about  
1850 See under *good*

Think of that when you are tempted to *have a good time* instead of studying hard.

ELIZABETH BANKS *Newspaper Girl* 1.

--**to pass the time away.** To spend one's spare moments

**tin.** [Brit.] Money.

She married a rich old man for his *tin*. MARION HARLAND *Alone*, XXIV.

**tin Lizzie.** [U. S.] A motor-car of cheap make.

**tip.** 1. A gratuity in money, as to a servant or other inferior; a *douceur*.

2. Expert and inside information or advice; as, a *tip* on the races or  
stock market. 3. A friendly hint on points in an examination. 4.

[Brit.] (1) A present in money to a schoolboy. (2) A false report.

(3) A poor translation.

**tip, tip off, or tip over the perch.** [Brit.] To pass away; die.

If that great man should *tip off*, 'twould be an irreparable loss

Either through Negligence, or for want of ordinary Sustenance, they both *tip over*  
the Perch. RABELAIS *Works* III, Prologue 15 Urquhart's trans.

**tip the wink.** To wink slyly as a private signal of caution, suggestion, etc.

I came as soon as you *tipped me the wink* SMOLLETT *Reprisal* II, iii.

**tip-toe, to be on; to stand atiptoe.** To strain every nerve, as in expect-  
tation; to be on the alert or qui vive.

The news that Smike had been caught and brought back in triumph ran like wild-  
fire through the hungry community, and expectation was on *tip-toe* all the morning

DICKENS *Nicholas Nickleby*.

**tip-top.** I. a. Superlatively good; of the highest class or rank. II. n.

The very top, summit, highest pitch or degree.

Quite select and frequented by the *tip-top* nobility. THACKERAY *Paris Sketch* Book II

On the *tip-top* of God's Hill, between this and Rochester, . . . I have a pretty  
little old fashioned house DICKENS *Letter* April 15, 1867

**tip up.** To pay out money; cash out; cut one's purse open.

"I should have liked to make her a little present," Osborne said to his friend in  
confidence, "only I am quite out of cash until my father *tips up*."

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair*

**tit for tat.** Retaliation in kind; a Roland for an Oliver.

I have had my *tit for tat* with John Russell, and I turned him out on Friday last  
PALMERSTON in McCarthy's *History of Our Own Times*, XXIII

**titivate.** To spruce up; adorn; complete one's toilette.

Call in your black man, and *titivate* a bit

THACKERAY *Virginians* XLVIII

**title-tattle.** I. *n.* Idle chatter; gossip; scandal. II. *v.* To make a practise of gossiping.

O, sir, you know I am a barber, and cannot *title-tattle*, I am one of those whose  
tongues are sweld in silence

LYLY *Midas* act iii, sc 2

**toad-eat.** *v.* To flatter, toady to, or fawn upon a friend; cringe.

I have got Charles into such order, that

he *toad-eats* me beyond all conception

LADY S. LENNOX *Life and Letters* I, 199

**toad-eater.** *n.* 1. A fawning parasite; sycophant; toady.

2. A mountebank's assistant, alleged to swallow toads in order that his quack employer might appear to cure their supposed poisonous effects.

(1) Such female companions, or more properly *toad-eaters*

COVENTRY *Pompay Lit* I, v.

David begged an explanation of what she meant by a *Toad-Eater* . . . Cynthia replied, . . . It is a Metaphor taken from a Mountebank's Boy's eating Toads, in order to show his Master's Skill in expelling Poison. It is built on Supposition that People who are in State of Dependence, are forced to do the most nauseous things that can be thought on, to please and humor their Patrons

FIELDING *David Simple* II, vii, 212

**to and again, to and back or to and fro.** Forward and back.

Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going *to and fro* in the earth, and from walking up and down in it

Job I, 7

**toast, to have on.** To have the advantage of.

Mason turned white with joy. He thought he had us on *on toast*

KIPLING *Stalky & Co.* 64.

**Toby.** A drinking mug or jug, usually in a man's grotesque figure. Sometimes called **Toby Fillpot**.

'Put *Toby* this way, my dear,' This *Toby* was the brown jug

DICKENS *Barnaby Rudge* IV.

**Toc. H.** [Eng.] Abbreviation of Talbot Club House. See TALBOT HOUSE.

**toddle.** I. *n.* A saunter or walk. II. *v.* To totter along as a child or invalid; used sometimes humorously. Hence **toddles**, **little toddler** or **toddlekins**, a small child.

I should like . . . to have a cottage in your park, *toddle* about, live mostly on milk and be taken care of by Mrs. Boswell.

JOHNSON, in *Boswell's Life*

**toddy.** 1. A beverage made of spirits, sugar, and hot water. 2. The fermented sap of the palmyra or other palm tree; palm wine.

**to-do.** A bustle or fuss; confusion or commotion; disturbance.

"What's *to do* is here!" he would say,

"I can lie in straw with as much satisfaction."

EVELYN *Diary* Mar. 22, 1675

**toe the line or mark.** To face the result of one's actions; also, to do one's full duty: from the practise of coming up to and standing by a line or mark, as in athletic contests.

He desired us to *toe a line* which means stand in a row

MARRYAT *Peter Simple* IX.

The chief mate . . . marked a line on the deck, brought the two boys up to it, making them *toe the mark*.

DANA *Two Years Before the Mast* XXVII

**toff.** [Brit.] A well-dressed gentlemanly man; a swell.

Fops flourished before my time, but I can remember the dandy, who was superseded by the count, the *toff*, and other varieties of the swell.

G. A. SALA in *Illustrated London News* April 21, 1883.

**token, by the same or by this.** By this fact recalling another: often used to introduce some corroborative or related circumstance.

To receive letters from people whom they do not know, and are, *by the same token*, never likely to know. PHYLLIS DARE *School to Stage* VII, 126

**toll, to take.** To cause to compensate or make amends. From the practise of collecting dues for the privilege of using a road or bridge.

With a right to take toll on the ferry.

OUIDA Wanda I, 61.

**tomahawk.** I. *n.* 1. [U. S.] A war-hatchet used by American Indians, originally of stone, afterwards of metal. 2. [Austral.] A native ax; also, any sort of hatchet. II. *v.* 1. [U. S.] To strike or kill with a tomahawk. 2. [Austral.] To cut a sheep while shearing it.

The poor sheep got fearfully tomahawked by the new hands

KINGLEY *Geoffrey Hamlyn*

**tom and jerry.** 1. A hot drink of rum and water, sweetened, spiced, and beaten up with eggs. 2. [Eng.] A public drinking-place.

**tomboy.** 1. A romping, boisterous girl; a hoiden. Originally a boisterous or rowdy boy.

We yet call a wench that skippeth or leapeth like a boy, a *tomboy*

VERSTEGAN *Rest Dec. Intelligence* 234

2. A courtesan.

**Tombs, the.** [U. S.] The chief police prison of the city of New York until 1906: so called in reference to its funereal Egyptian architecture, now replaced by a modern structure. Hence, **Tombs lawyer**, an attorney whose clients were chiefly prisoners detained in the Tombs.

**tom-collins.** [U. S.] An iced beverage composed of lemon-juice, Old Tom gin, and soda-water, sweetened to taste.

**Tom, Dick, and Harry.** An indiscriminate collection of persons; any of a crowd; the people at large; the masses: used attributively, and chiefly in a disparaging sense.

*Tom, Dick, and Harry* were not to censure them and their convert.

J. ADAMS *Works* X, 351.

He rode from public house to public house, and shouted his sorrows into the mug of *Tom, Dick, and Harry*.

R. L. STEVENSON *Kidnapped* 287.

**Tom Double.** One given to double-dealing; a swindler.

**Tom Drum's entertainment.** Rough practical jokes; horse-play; coarse or vulgar humor or pastimes.

**Tom Farthing.** A tomfool.

**tomfool.** A silly or idiotic person. By extension, an annoying trifle or any person given to nonsensical behavior.

**tommy.** [Brit.] 1. A penny roll; hence, bread or a commodity accepted in payment for wages. 2. Trade or barter on the truck system. 3. Provisions, food

—**tommy-shop.** A shop where employees are obliged to purchase their supplies

The employees . . . supplied them with food in order that they might spend no money save in the truck-shops or *Tommy-shops*. HINTON *Eng. Radical Leaders* 145.

The store belonging to an employer, where his workmen must take part of their earnings in kind, especially in *Tommy* or food, whence the name *Tommy-shop*.

ANNANDALE quoted by FARMER and HENLEY in *Slang and its Analogues* vol. vii, p. 153

**Tommy Atkins.** [Brit.] An enlisted man in the regular army. See THOMAS ATKINS.

**tommy-rot.** Ridiculous nonsense; drivel; bosh.

Gladstone's gab about 'masses and classes' is all *tommy-rot*. Punch Sept 10, 1887.

**tom-noddy** or **tommy-noddy**. [Brit.] A simpleton or stupid person; also, an ignoramus.

**tom-noodle**. Same as TOM-NODDY.

**to-morrow come never**. A time that will never occur; a date in the Greek Kalends; never.

"I shall acquaint your mother, Miss May, with your pretty behavior to-morrow"  
"I suppose you mean *to-morrow come never*," answered Magnolia.

LE FANU *The House in the Churchyard* p. 118

**Tom Pepper**. An exceptional liar: a seaman's euphemism.

**Tom Thumb**. A diminutive person; hence, any dwarfed or diminutive living thing.

**Tom Tiddler**. A person who is unequal to the task of holding his own against shrewder competitors.—**Tom Tiddler's ground**. [Brit.] A child's game, originally *Tom t' Idler's ground*, in which one player aims to defend his territory against all comers used as symbolic of any place where even children can "pick up" gold and silver," or for any debatable ground.

Ireland was then the *Tom Tiddler's ground* of parliamentary fortune hunters.

W. SICHEL *Glenberrie Journals* 1, 6

**tongue** is used idiomatically in various senses in the following phrases.—

**a long tongue**. A babbler; one who tells tales; a gossip.—**hold your tongue**. Cease talking—**on (or at) the tip (or end) of one's tongue**. On the point of telling or speaking, almost recalled and ready to be spoken

She had arguments *at the tip of her tongue*.

DE FOE *Moll Flanders* 184

**—red tongue**. Typhoid fever—**the tongue of the trumpet**. The principal person or the chief part of anything Used also to mean the main point of a discussion or argument

He is *the tongue of the trumpet* to the whole squad of them. SCOTT *Redgauntlet* II, 225.

**—the vulgar tongue**. The vernacular of a country.—**to find one's tongue**. To recover one's power of speech—**to give tongue** To speak out: primarily a phrase from the kennels, as when a hound barks when sighting or scenting game.

When Papa opened the door Chubby was *giving tongue* energetically.

GEORGE ELIOT *Scenes Clerical Life*. Amos Barton II

**—to hold one's or the tongue**. To keep silence or refrain from speech; to make no mention of; say nothing

Here is your father who knows it is, though he thinks it best to *hold his tongue*

GEORGINA M CRAIK *Godfrey Helstone* 26

**—tongue-man**. A chatterer—**tongue-sore**. Given to evil-speaking or vilification—**to throw tongue**. To give tongue—**to wag the tongue**. To be given to babbling or incessant talk.—**tonguester**. A chatterer—**with the tongue in the cheek**. To speak insincerely, with mockery

There was no speaking *with his tongue in the cheek*. He spoke straight from the heart

SIR E. W. HAMILTON *Gladstone* 10.

**tonic**. [Brit.] An appetiser; a bracer; a drink.

**tony**. [U. S.] Highly genteel; stylish; fashionable.

**too funny for anything, any use, cents**, etc. [U. S.] Very absurd: said of persons, events, or things.

**tool**. One who is used in carrying out the designs of another; a catspaw; dupe. Hence, a **mere tool**, a sychophant; **an old tool**, a good for nothing, shiftless fellow; **a poor tool**, a clumsy worker

Fools were promoted to the council-board, *tools* to the bench, and bullies to the sword

GORTH *Dispensary* iii

Oh, the easy blockhead! What a *tool* I have made of him.

SHERIDAN *Duenna* act II, sc. 4.

**to one's face**. In defiance of one; in one's presence.

**too too.** Extremely; greatly.

O, but I love his lady *too too* much!

SHAKESPEARE *Two Gentlemen of Verona* act ii, sc 4

**too-too.** Over sentimental; extremely gushy; as, "In everything that concerns her he is too utterly *too-too!*"

**too proud to fight.** [U. S.] With cause so just that it does not require force to sustain it. See quotation.

The example of America must be the example not merely of peace because it will not fight, but of peace because peace is the healing and elevating influence of the world, and strife is not. There is such a thing as a man being *too proud to fight*. There is such a thing as a nation being so right that it does not need to convince others by force that it is right. WOODROW WILSON *Address in Convention Hall Philadelphia*, May 10, 1915

**tooth and nail.** To attack or defend with great energy; literally, by biting and clawing.

I am ready to oppose any such project *tooth and nail*. HUXLEY in *Life* II, xviii, 312

**too thin.** [Brit.] Not substantial; unreal, as a pretext or excuse, etc.; not solid enough to deceive; that can be seen through. Sometimes abbreviated T.T.

You were ever good at sudden commendations now they are *too thin* and base to hide offences. SHAKESPEARE *Henry VIII* act v, sc 2

This pretext was *too thin* to impose upon her lover. SMOLLETT *Peregrine Pickle* XXVI

**tope.** [Brit.] To drink to excess; hence, **to tope it about**, to pass the bottle briskly.—**toper.** One given to hard drinking.

Was there ever so thirsty an elf?—But he may still *tope on*

HOOD *Don't You Smell Fire?*

Sits among his *topers* at the twopenny club

TUCKER *Light of Nature* I, i, v

**top-heavy.** 1. Out of proportion; hence, impracticable. 2. Intoxicated; drunk and incapable.

**top-hole.** [Brit.] First class, wholly fit: supposed by Murray (*New English Dict.*) to be a mining phrase, as in the first quotation.

The victims at the time of the explosion were engaged widening the 'tophole' between No. 6 and No. 7 levels.

Dundee Advertiser, Jan 23, 1905

A "top-hole" idea, he called it

E. V. LUCAS *Over Bemertons* ii

A piece like the Merry Widow would be *top-hole*

Blackwood's Mag Sept 1909

**top notch.** [U. S.] The acme of perfection in anything: in allusion to the highest notch in a tree; hence, **top-notch**. One who notches tree-tops; hence, one who is far above his fellows.

My seamanship, which was *top-notch* for my day

J. K. BANGS *Pursuit of House Boat* III, 51

There were not enough *top notches* to go round

Report Kansas State Board Agriculture 1902, 64

**top off or up.** 1. To give the finishing touch to; to complete; conclude.

He has *topped off* his home training with a . . . foreign finish

O. W. HOLMES *Poet at Breakfast Table* II.

They absorb pale ale, and *top-up* with glasses of strong waters

THACKERAY *Book of Snobs* XXXIX.

2. [Brit. Cant.] To place the best, as of fruit or of any commodity, on the top.

Ask any coster that knows the world and he will tell you that all the salesmen in the market *top-up*.

MATHEW *London Labour* I, 61.

**top of one's bent, folly, humor, etc.** To the height, farthest, or extreme limit of one's feelings, folly, humor, etc.

He flattered French vanity to the *top of its bent*. SMILES *Character* vi (1876), 178.



**top of the morning to you! the.** The best of the day to you! a salutation still current in Ireland, to which the rejoinder is, "and the balance or rest of the day to your honor, reverence," etc. Always used with the definite article.

**top of the tree, at the.** [Brit.] In the foremost position; in the top notch.

**topper.** [Brit.] A high silk hat; a stove-pipe; also, a cigar stump or the heel left in a pipe after smoking; hence, **topper-hunter**, a tobacco scavenger.

**top-sawyer.** A first-rate man, as the one who stands above the lumber over a saw-pit. Hence, a person who occupies a superior position.

"I'll marry a *top-sawyer*," he used to say, whenever his uncle broached the question of his settlement in life

WHYTE-MELVILLE *M* or *N*

**topsyturvy.** In dire confusion; upside down; upset; hence, **topsy-turvydom**, a state of confusion or a place in such a state.

Insane patients whose system, all out of joint, finds matter for screaming, laughter in mere *topsy-turvy*

GEORGE ELIOT *Theophrastus Such* *N*

The view of cynical *topsyturvydom* which has been so long worked with success at length shows signs of exhaustion

*The Athenæum* London, Mar 21, 1885

**torch.** A light; hence, the light of intellectual development.

The torch of Greek learning and civilization was to be extinguished

SMITH *Carthage* 19

—to hand or pass on the torch. To give light to another that he may carry on the work of intellectual advancement.

**to-rights.** [U. S.] In proper order; in correct place or position.

You will find her putting dishes to *rights* in the closet, or sweeping the floor

SEBA SMITH *Way Down East* 196

**Tory.** 1. A plunderer; hence, a ruffian, a bully.

Deprived of all they ever had [by Cromwell], they took to a wild life of robbery, and were called *Tories*, from an Irish word [*toiridhe*] meaning a plunderer

WILLIAM STEPHENSON GREGG *Irish History for English Readers* p. 62

2. [Eng.] A member of a political party that succeeded the Cavaliers about 1679: a name given by their adversaries the Whigs.

A gentlemen had a red Ribband in his hat he said it signified that he was a *Tory*, what's that sd she? he ans an Irish Rebel I hear farther that instead of Cavalier and Roundhead, now they are called *Tories* and *Wiggs*.

O HEYWOOD *Diaries*, etc Oct 24, 1681

In defence of the Monarchy, the Church, and the territorial constitution of the country, the *Tory* party has never faltered

T E KIBBEL *Hist Toryism* VIII, 398

3. [American.] A supporter of the British government during the Revolutionary War.

Washington will not trust us with the keeping of a suspected *Tory*, if we let this rascal trifle in this manner with the corps

J. F COOPER *Spy* XXIX

4. One who in politics supports the policy that to the victor belong the spoils.

**toss or toss up.** An even chance: from the practise of flipping a coin to determine a choice or decide a bet.—to toss or to toss up. To toss or flip a coin; to turn a pancake, etc.

They . . . decided by the *toss* of a halfpenny that Concanen should defend the ministry.

L. STEPHEN in *Dict Nat, Biog.* XI, 467

A *toss-up* decides which party is to play first

S DARYL *Quoits and Bow's*

**tote.** [U. S.] To carry; bear a burden; to endure. Hence, to **tote a gun**, to go armed; to carry a revolver—to **tote fair**. To act fairly and squarely; to be on the level.

**Tote.** Origin unknown; usually said to be an African word introduced by Southern negroes, but the African words which have come into English use through Southern negroes are few and doubtful . . . and do not include verbs *Century Dictionary*.  
I **toted** up a load and went back and sat down on the bow of the boat to rest.

MARK TWAIN *Huck Finn*  
In "The Nation" of February 15, 1894 Mr. P. A. Bruce cited under date of 1677 the earliest example of the word yet adduced, and pointed out that the smallness of the negro population at that time would render improbable the supposition . . . sometimes advanced that the word had its origin with the negro race in this country (p. 121). In the same paper a correspondent asserted that the word was used in middle England, Southern Yorkshire and Lincolnshire in exactly the same way that it is used in eastern Virginia. *The Dial* Feb 16, 1898, xxiv, 106

**tottery, tottlish or totty.** Trembling; unsteady; shaky; rolling. Hence, **totty-headed.** Harebrained; giddy.

When I looked up and saw what a *tottery* performance it was, I concluded to give them a wide berth.  
HUGHES *Tom Brown at Oxford* VI.  
I was somewhat *totty* when I received the good knight's blow.

**touch.** 1. To acquire, as by trade; attain in value; reach the point of: said of finances. SCOTT *Ivanhoe* XXXII

England, I conceive, may *touch* about a million sterling a year.

2. [Australian Slang.] To act unfairly. 3. To obtain, as by secret or questionable methods. 4. [U. S.] To borrow money. SMOLLETT *Humphrey Clinker* II, 134

He lived upon credit and what he could *touch*

MARSHALL *Pomes* 17

5. To steal.

A dip *touched* the Canadian Sheriff for his watch and chain while he was reading the riot act *The Globe-Democrat* St. Louis, 1888.

**touch** is used in a number of idiomatic senses as in the following — a **near touch.** A narrow escape—royal **touch.** A fancied cure for scrofulous diseases, as by touch of a king's hand—to be or keep in touch with. To be in close communication, agreement, interest or sympathy with

Sir Henry Parkes has always *kept himself in touch* with English public opinion.

*Pall Mall Gazette*, Jan 25, 1884

But they are not *in touch* . . . with all the best information which the Board of Admiralty have at their command. EARL SPENCER in *Par. Debates* July 5, 1901  
—to **keep touch.** To keep faith.—to **touch and go.** To handle or treat lightly or briefly, as anything quickly done —**touch and go.** 1. A critical or a turning point 2. A narrow escape. 3. A short or sharp encounter 4. Something sketchy, careless, superficial. 5. A quick-tempered person.

(1) Howsoever we may taste of it to bring on Appetite, let it be but *touch and go*.

MOUFET and BENNET *Health's Imp.* 59

(3) A murder of that kind must be *touch and go*—no sooner thought of than done.

MISS BRADDON *Wyllards' Weir* IV.

(5) Old *touch and go*, why so hasty?  
—to **make a touch.** 1. To borrow money 2. To pick a pocket—to **touch elbows.** To be intimate with; come into close contact—to **touch off.** 1. To hit off; hit the mark exactly. 2. To size up; take the measure of 3. To fire, as a cannon or magazine Hence, to cause an explosion or disturbance 4. To be a match for

5. To finish by touches; sketch lightly. 6. To recite or to play, as on a piano

(3) The only delay . . . is due to a fear that a despatch of the troops will *touch off* the magazine. *The Daily Chronicle* London, Dec 6, 1907

(6) I was [told] . . . that I should now see something *touched off* to a nicety, for [Mr. Spriggin was going to give us 'Mad Tom' in all its glory. GOLDSMITH *Essays* I.  
—to **touch on the raw** or **to touch to the quick, soul, heart, etc.** To hurt, wound, grieve or distress by touching a tender or sore spot; largely in figurative use. It *touched* scores of laborers on the raw. J. ARCH *Story of Life* XI, 257.

They *touched* the ministers of justice to the quick. E. BLOUNT trans. *Comestaggio*.  
—to **touch up.** 1. To add finishing strokes to; to correct. 2. To bring to the memory of; remind. 3. To flick lightly, as with a whip: said of a horse.—to **touch**

**wood.** To avert an evil omen, according to an ancient superstition reflected in a game of that name in which the player who succeeds in touching wood is safe from capture—**true as touch.** Absolutely true, real, certain; sure

**touchy.** Peevish, unduly sensitive, irritable, quick to take offense.

You tell me that you apprehend.

My verse may *touchy* folk offend

GAY *Fables* IV.

**tough.** [U. S.] A rough; bully; larrikin; plug-ugly.

**tousle or tousle.** To pull about; mess up; rumple; hence **tousy, unkempt, dishevelled, rough.**

A very heavy mat of sandy hair in a decidedly *tousled* condition

Stowe *Uncle Tom's Cabin* IX

**tout.** [Brit.] 1. To be on the lookout for clients. 2. To be on one's guard; to look sharp. 3. To spy and sell information on a horse-race or other contest.

Barristers' clerks, *touting* among prisoners and prosecutors. *Law Mag. Review* 22.

Everybody was industrious, the professional *touts* being outnumbered by the amateurs

*The Field* London, Oct 3, 1885

—**touter.** One who *touts*

**tow, in.** Under a person's influence or control: said especially of women who lead their suitors as with a tow-line or an apron-string.—**to take in tow.** To take in charge, help, assist, as when a tugboat draws an ocean liner through the water, or a disabled motor-car is moved by being drawn by another vehicle

Sir Brian stood in the middle of Pall Mall shaking his stick at the cabman, whose number he took, and causing some interruption to the traffic, until he was courteously but firmly taken in *tow* by a policeman

*Good Words*, 1887

**towering.** Violent; outrageous; extreme.

Russell went into a *towering* passion. MACAULAY *History of England* XXII

**town.** [U. S. Pol.] 1. A territorial division established by law for political or municipal purposes. 2. A subdivision of a county, being a quasi-corporate body, that may include villages and towns proper. 3. [Brit.] Originally, dwellings enclosed within fortifications; later, a tithing or vill; subsequently, a city, borough, or any collection of dwelling-houses larger than a village—**man about town.** A man of means and leisure, a person of fashion: sometimes used disparagingly

"Why should I give her pure heart to a *man about town*?"

"Because you will break it else," said Miss Somerset C READE.

—**to go to town.** 1. [Brit.] To go to London 2. [U. S.] To go to the nearest city

I know when he will *come to town* DEKKER AND WEBSTER *Westward Hoe*, act iii, sc 1.

**town-bull, to roar like a.** To bellow or cry aloud; express one's feelings with violence.

**town-house.** 1. [Brit.] The London residence of a nobleman or territorial magnate. 2. [U. S.] The poor-house or alms-house.

**town-meeting.** [U. S.] An assemblage of the citizens of a town in New England for the transaction of business relating to their self-government.

I know not when he will *come to town*

DEKKER AND WEBSTER *Westward Hoe*, act iii, sc. 1.

**township.** [U. S.] A territorial subdivision of a county with certain corporate powers of municipal government, the corporation or government thereof; specif., one of the tracts of the United States public lands, six miles square, as surveyed and designated of record under the provisions of the acts of Congress of 1785 and 1796. 2. [Canada.] A subdivision of a county. 3. [Brit.] The district belonging to a town, tithing or vill;

formerly, a subdivision in northern counties for administrative purposes.

4. [Australian.] A village or town; the public or crown land reserved for a town.

**toy.** [Brit.] 1. An idle tale. 2. Anything diminutive or of little value, such as a trinket, nicknack. Also something for adornment or amusement.

(1) Here by the way I will tell you a merry *toy*. LATIMER *Sermon before Edward VI*

(2) Perched on the top of a hill was a conspicuous *toy* of a Church.

BLACK *Houseboat II*

**track of, to keep.** To keep account of, to grasp or follow a sequence of events. The negative is rendered to **lose track of**.

The noise of the two crowds made it difficult to *keep track of* what was going on.

GILMORE *Mongols*, 251

**tracks, in one's.** [U. S.] On the spot; at once; instantly.

The rifle was fired and he fell dead *in his tracks*. CARLETON *New Purchase XVII*.

**tracks, to cover one's.** To hide one's deeds; screen one's movements from observation.

Whatever else he lacks,

He has the art of *covering up his tracks*

Masque *Poets* 244.

**trade, two of a.** Two people in the same profession or business.

It is proverbial that *two of a trade* seldom agree

Edinburgh *Review* 1886

**trail.** [U. S.] The faint traces left by a pedestrian or horseman on the ground; hence, to **follow one's trail**, to follow one's track, to **trail a man**, etc., to shadow so as to watch the movements of, spy on—to hit the trail. To be converted from sinful ways, join the church.

**trail off.** To ramble off in a careless, indefinite or casual way; to **tail off**.

The soft-hearted Slowboy *trailed off* at the junction into

a lamentable howl

DICKENS *Crickets* III

**train.** 1. [Brit.] To travel by railway-train. 2. [U. S.] To jest, romp, carry on. 3. [Sporting Cant.] To prepare for a contest by special exercises and diet.

(1) So exhausted were the men from the effects of the previous days ride that all *trained* from Winchester to Farnham

*Pall Mall Gazette* Apr 2, 1888.

(2) The girl broke into a fondly approving laugh at his drolling 'Oh, I guess you love to *train*!'

HOWELLS *Hazard New Fort* II, viii.

(3) A threat of latent anger in expression, like that of a man *trained* too fine and harassed with perpetual vigilance.

STEVENSON *Memoirs and Portraits VI Pastoral*, 96

—**train down.** [Sporting Cant.] To reduce weight by exercise and diet.—**train off.** [Sporting Cant.] To lose vigor or strength by over-training

**translate.** [Brit.] To patch up shoes from fragments of old ones, or to turn or cut down a coat or other garment.

The cobbler is affronted, if you don't call him Mr. *Translator*.

BROWN *Works*, III, 73.

The clobberer, the reviver, and the *translator* lay hands on them . . . to patch, to sew up, and to restore, as far as possible the garments to their pristine appearance

*The Times* London, Nov 2, 1864

**transmogrify.** To transform, alter, change.—**transmogrification.** The act of changing or altering in any way.

But of all restorations, reparations, and *transmogrifications*, that inflicted upon the Cnidian Venus at the Vatican is the most grotesque

*The Nation* London, March 20, 1884.

**trap.** [Brit.] Fraud; trickery; deceit; hence, to **understand trap**, to be awake to one's own interests; be keen; alert.

He *understands* booksellers' *trap* as well as any man

COWPER *Lett to Lady Hesketh*, Dec. 15, 1755.

—to be up to trap. To be cunning or knowing.

A clever ready-witted fellow, *up to all sorts of traps* S LOVER *Handy Andy* II.  
**trap.** [Brit.] 1. A carriage or conveyance of any kind, as, a pony-trap, a dog-cart, etc.

I think you must make room for me inside the *trap* It is remarkable how much  
men despise close carriages INGELOW *Off the Skellings*

2. A detective; a policeman or a sheriff's officer.

Where a ruffler may be, without fear that the *traps* should distress him

LYTTON *Paul Clifford* 80.

**trapes, traipes.** I. *n.* [Brit.] A gadabout, slattern, a sloven.

From door to door I'd sooner whine and beg Than marry such a *trapes*.

GAY *What D'ye Call It*, I, i.

II. *v.* To gad about; also, to go around in slovenly attire.

Lo, next two slip-shod muses *trapse* along, In lofty madness, meditating song

POPE *Dunciad* III, 141.

**traveler, to play or tip the.** To indulge in romancing; tell travelers' tales; to deceive; impose upon the credulity of.

Aha! do'st thou *tip me the traveller*, my boy?

SMOLLETT *Sir L Greaves* VI

**tread on air.** To be in an elated condition, as one walking on air; also, to walk with a springy step—jubilantly, buoyantly.

Leaving the gaol, Mr Lexly seemed to *tread on air* W MELVILLE *Uncle J* XXII

**tread on delicate ground, eggs, thin ice, etc.** To be very careful, circumspect and deliberate.

Was the author *treading* upon still more delicate ground than the Scholiast has imagined

T MITCHELL *Aristophanes* 452, Note.

He had his jury to deal with, and if he did not *tread upon eggs* they would conclude sinistrously

NORTH *Liter* I, 266

**tread the boards or stage.** To be an actor, or actress; be a professional player.

One that never *trod the stage* before

STEELE *Spectator*, No. 22.

**tread the foot or shoe amiss or awry.** To step aside from virtue.

If she chance to *tread her foot* a little awry

EATON *Honeycomb of Free Justification* 110.

**tread the shoes straight.** To travel the path of rectitude and propriety; to be circumspect in conduct.

**treat, to stand.** To bear the expenses of an entertainment.

We had a very merry party at Vauxhall, Gus insisting on *standing treat*

THACKERAY *Great Hogarty Diamond* IX.

**tree.** [U. S.] To get complete advantage of; have under control: from the practise, in hunting raccoons, of driving them up trees so as to make their capture certain

It's no use, you are *treed*, and you can't help yourself If I give information you swing.

KINGSLEY *Geoffrey Hamlyn* v.

—up a tree. [U. S.] Unable to escape, like a hunted animal in the highest branches, trapped, in a fix

I had her in my power—up a tree, as the Americans say

THACKERAY *Major Gahagan* V

**trice.** Instantly; at once; forthwith: formerly on a *trice*, now only in the phrase in a trice.

On a *trice* . . . Even in a dream, were we divided from them

SHAKESPEARE *Tempest* act v, sc. 1.

In a *trice* the turnpike-men

Their gates wide open threw.

COWPER *John Gilpin* st. XXX.

**trick out.** To decorate or dress up.

*Tricking out* tables to look like altars

JENKINS *Haverholme* 153.

**trick worth two of that.** A better and simpler plan; a method more certain of success.

Old Sir John Savil found a *trick worth two of that*, he had a project would bring in double the money.

L'ESTRANGE *Charles I* (1654). 65.

**trim.** To call to account; reprove; dress down; thrash.—**trimming.** A scolding or jacketing.

**trip.** 1. To make a journey without regard to length; especially [Gt. Brit.] to make a short journey, as a summer excursion. 2. A failure or mistake.—**tripper, trippist.** An excursionist —**trip up.** To catch the foot and thereby stumble or fall. often with *foot, heels*, etc.

The right adjusting of her Train lest it should chance to *trip up her heels*.

ADDISON *Spectator*. No. 42.

What lay on the floor to *trip your foot*

BROWNING *Ferishtah, Shah Abbas* 144.

**Tripes.** [Cambridge University.] An honor list; the examination from which such lists are made; or the honor men so listed: from the stool on which champions of the University sat during the disputations at Commencements on Ash Wednesdays, at which time Bachelors of Art were admitted to their degree

**tripping.** Moving in a light, quick, easy way; be lightfooted, nimble; stumbling, sinning, erring.

You will find his conversation, easy and *tripping* as it is, very inferior to his writings.

LORD ACTON *Letter to Gladstone* 6

The *tripping* Dame cou'd find no favour.

ROWE *Fair Penitent. Epil*

**Triton among or of the minnows.** One who appears great, when compared with his associates: a Shakespearean phrase in allusion to the sea god of classic mythology.

The wretched ambition of figuring as the *triton of the minnows*.

COLERIDGE *Log Sermons*, 387

**Trojan.** 1. A courageous and persevering person; an indefatigable earnest worker. 2. A boon companion; a jolly fellow.—**like a Trojan.** With energy and perseverance

I worked hard at that gown . . . Else helped me with it *like a Trojan*.

G. ALLEN *Typewriter Girl* xvii, 179

**trot out.** To make a display of; exhibit or show off.

You want to *trot me out*, but it's no go.

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair*, XXXIV.

**trotter.** A foot.—**trottery.** A dance-hall in which such dances as the tango, turkey-trot, fox-trot, etc., to syncopated music, are in vogue.

**trounce.** 1. To beat severely. 2. In earlier usage, to punish; vex; trouble.

**trowel, to lay on with.** 1. To be lavish in flattery or praise; extol extravagantly.

Well said. that was *laid on with a trowel* SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act i, sc. 2

2. To do clumsily or awkwardly; overdo.

Paints, d'ye say? Why she *lays it on with a trowel*

CONGREVE *Double Dealer* act iii, sc. 10.

**truant, to play.** To absent oneself from duty, as a child from school without leave; to neglect any task; shirk one's duty.

Rest those brows, let wearied eyes *play truant* to toil

BOWEN *Virgil Æneid* V, 845.

**truck.** 1. [Brit.] Barter in kind; trading by exchange of commodities.

2. [U. S.] Market garden produce, vegetables in general. Hence, **truck-farm**, a place where truck is raised by a **truck farmer**, a farmer who pro-

duces garden vegetables.—to have truck with. To have dealings with, often used with a negative.

No use to take *truck* and leave money.

MARK TWAIN *Huckleberry Finn*.

**true as God in Heaven, the Gospel, I stand here, steel.** Faithful to fact; veritable: used emphatically in asserting that a thing stated is genuine—out of the true. Not in line of adjustment; not plumb; not adjusted with the precision required. said of machinery or mechanical parts, etc.—true to name. Not varying from its typical species said chiefly of plants.

**true bill.** [Legal Cant.] The endorsement by a Grand Jury of a bill of indictment which they find sustained by the evidence submitted. Hence, a true statement or charge.

**trump.** A fine fellow; a Simon pure; a good all-round thoroughly sound man.

Toffy, what a downright regular old *trump* you are! DU MAURIER *Trilby* II, 257

**trump card, to hold the, or to hold trumps.** To be in command of a situation; hold a winning hand; be sure of result: a phrase from the card table.—to play one's trump card. See under PLAY

**trumpery.** 1. Showy but worthless stuff; worthless finery. 2. One of low birth and breeding; a vulgarian, parvenu or upstart.

(1) The *trumpery* in my house go bring hither. For stale to catch these thieves.

SHAKESPEARE *Tempest* act iv, sc 1.

(2) If I was a Mr. Jones I should look a little higher than such *trumpery* as Molly Seagrims.

FIELDING *Tom Jones* V, iv

**trumpet, to blow one's own.** To sound one's own praises; speak well of oneself.

If you wish in this world to advance  
Your merits you're bound to enhance;  
You must stir it and stomp it,  
And blow your own trumpet,  
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance!

W. S. GILBERT *Ruddigore*

**trumpeter, to be one's own.** To act as one's own herald of one's ability, character or quality; blow one's own horn.

He hoped I was a good boy, which, being compelled to be my own *trumpeter*, I very modestly declared I was.

CAPTAIN MARRYAT

—to trump up. 1. To make up or invent, fabricate or concoct; set up or devise without regard to scruple; to allege, bring forward. 2. To praise or brag about; extol unduly

(1) She had not . . . courage to confess why she had come, but *trumped up* an excuse.

HOWELL *Silas Lapham* VIII.

To husband a lie, and *trump it up* in some extraordinary emergency.

ADDISON *Spectator*. No. 507.

(2) See also how Pope and Swift, and others, *trumped up* Lord Bolingbroke for a philosopher

LEIGH HUNT *Men Women & B* ii, 1, 4.

**try back.** [Brit.] To retrace one's steps; to seek to recover something lost or missed, as a former station, standpoint, statement.

She was marvellously quick to discover that she was astray, and to *try back*.

LEVER *Davenport Dunn* XI.

**try conclusions.** To enter into contest with, so as to determine which party is the superior.

Put his tissues under the microscope and *try conclusions* with him.

KINGSLEY *Two Years Ago* V.

**try it on the dog.** [Theat. Cant.] To test the value of a new play by presenting it to a provincial audience.

**try on.** An attempt at testing.—to try it on. To attempt to outwit, cheat, or get the better of.

No jokes, old boy, no *trying it on me*.

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* XXXIV.

**try one's hand.** To undertake as an experiment; make an attempt; as, he *tried his hand* at farming.

He determined to *try his hand* at negotiation.

WASHINGTON IRVING *Knickerbocker* V, iii, 271

**tryout.** [U. S. Cant.] A competition; a selective trial; an elimination contest in sports.

One girl represented the Athena Club in the debaters *tryout*, and won a place as an inter-collegiate debater.

*Tyler* VI, 171.

**tube.** [Brit.] I. *n.* One of the underground systems of railways common to London, England. II. *v.* To travel by a tubular railway, more frequently as to *tube it*.—*tuppenny* or *two-penny tube*. The first and deepest of the London underground railway systems, because at first twopence constituted a flat fare.

**tuck into.** To feed heartily and greedily; pitch in.

Always in at dinner time and to be found at odd hours *tucking in*.

EDNA LYALL *Knights Errant* XV.

**tuck of drum.** [Scot.] A beat or tap of a drum: used as a summons to arms or for public assembly.

Give me the heroes who, at *tuck-of drum*

Salute thy staff, immortal Quattlebum.

WHITTIER *Panorama* st. 18

**tuck out.** [Brit.] A hearty meal; a spread of food.

**tuck up.** To gather in folds; gird up.

The stout north countrywoman *tucked up* her petticoats, and began to climb up the steep path with a will.

OWEN *Moths* I, 77.

**tucker, to make or earn one's.** [Australia.] To earn one's food.

A peer's son who is *earning his tucker* as a station cook in New Zealand

A. FORBES in *Contemp. Review*, Oct. 1883.

**tuckered out.** [New Eng. Dial.] To be tired out, exhausted.

But 't ain't so, of the mind gets *tuckered out*

HOWELLS *Lady of the Aroostook* XXIII.

**tuft.** [Brit. Univ. Cant.] A golden tassel formerly worn on their caps by nobles or the sons of nobles, while undergraduates at Oxford; now in disuse. Hence, **tuft hunter**, one who seeks the society of his superiors, a snob, a toady.

Lord Roseberry . . . was one of the last undergraduates of Christ Church who wore the gold tassel known by the name of '*tuft*,' which was the distinguishing mark of noblemen and the sons of noblemen.

*Westminster Gazette* March 5, 1894

**tug.** 1. [Eton Cant.] A scholar of the King's foundation, a collegier: a corruption of *toga*. 2. [Winchester Cant.] Anything vapid, stale, or common—*tuggery*. College.—*tugclothes*. Ordinary clothing—*tug-jaw*. Wearisome talk.—*tugs*. Stale news.

**tug of war.** 1. A contest in which a number of persons at one end of a rope pull against a like number at the other end, each side endeavoring to drag the other across a line marked between. 2. A laborious effort; supreme contest; struggle for supremacy.

When Greeks joined Greeks then was the *tug of war*.

N. LEE *Alexander the Great* act IV, sc 2

**tumble** is used with various meanings in the following phrases.—to **tumble.** To comprehend; understand; as, do you *tumble* or *tumble to it*?—**tumble home.** To slope inwards: said of the sides of some ships—*tumble in*.



1. To fall or stumble in hastily, without order or arrangement; accumulate promiscuously.

What was the cause? Why their profits came *tumbling in*.

BUNYAN *Greatness of Soul*.

2. To turn into bed, retire for the night

*Tumble into bed* and go to sleep as fast as you can. LEVER *J. Hinton XIII*.  
—to *tumble over*. 1. To toss about carelessly. 2. To upset. 3. To fall over, as over an obstruction —to *tumble to*. 1. To tumble. 2. To go to work vigorously.  
—to *tumble up*. 1. To get up; get out of bed. 2. *Naut.* To come up, as a sailor hastily through a hatchway. 3. To throw into confusion; mess.—*tumble-down*. Rickety, as if about to fall in pieces; dilapidated; decayed —*tumbled up and down*. Agitated in one's mind; perplexed —*tumble home*. [*Naut.*] That part of some vessels' hulls which leans inward; above the line of greatest breadth.

**tumbler**. 1. One who or that which twists and turns or tumbles, as an acrobat, a pigeon, a dog, etc. 2. A drinking-glass without a stem, and originally made with a rounded or pointed base so that it might not be set down until drained.

(1) *Tumbler*, a dog formerly employed for taking rabbits This it effected by tumbling itself about in a careless manner till within reach of its prey.

HALLIWELL *Dictionary*

(2) Mr Stiggins took down a *tumbler*, and with great deliberation put four lumps of sugar in it

DICKENS *Pickwick* LII

**tum-tum**. I. *n.* 1. [Anglo-Indian and Brit. Colonial.] A dog-cart. 2. [U. S. Chinook.] The heart. 3. [Slang.] The stomach. Sometimes *tum or tummy*. 4. [West Indian.] A dish of plantains, boiled, and made into a cake or pudding. 5. A tom-tom. II. *v.* To strum on a stringed instrument or drum.

**tune** is used idiomatically in a few phrases such as the following.—  
**in tune**. In harmony or agreement with; in good condition.—**out of tune**. At odds with, not in agreement, out of harmony.

If our bodies be *out of tune* so are our minds too. BEVERIDGE *Sermons* I, 332  
—to the *tune of*. To the amount, cost or sum of.

A defaulter to the imposing *tune of* £10,000.

Punch Aug. 22, 1874.

—the *tune the old cow died of*. Any jarring sound or tiresome counsel instead of help; remonstrance without relief, explanation in place of assistance. The phrase is traced to an old ballad which ran, in part, as follows:

"There was an old man, and he had an old cow,

But he had no fodder to give her,

So he took up his fiddle, and played her the tune,—

Consider, good cow, consider,

This isn't the time for the grass to grow;

Consider, good cow, consider." *Notes and Queries* 11th Series XI, 309.

The *tune the old cow died of* throughout grunts and groans of instruments.

LADY GRANVILLE *Letters* II, 218.

**turf, the**. The race-course or the occupation of horse-racing; as, news of the *turf*.

Already there was among our nobility and gentry a passion for the amusements of the *turf*

MACAULAY *History of Eng* III, 1, 315.

**Turk**. A person of brutal and vicious habits; a barbarian; a cruel or tyrannical man; an ill-tempered or intractable man.—a little or young *Turk*. An ungovernable child or one who can not be kept in control.—the *Grand or Great Turk*. The Sultan of Turkey.—to *turn Turk*. To behave as a barbarian or savage; act the brute or tyrant: from the practise of prisoners of war who to escape death accepted Islam.

He offered to *turn Turk* if they would spare him.

S. BERINGTON *Q. di Lucca's Mem.* 282.

—**Young Turk.** The dominant political party in Turkey which sought to arouse and so bring about the rejuvenescence in the Turkish Empire since Abdul Hamid II was dethroned in 1909

**turn.** 1. A trick, device, stratagem. 2. [Stage Cant.] An act or specialty, as in a vaudeville house.

**Turn** is used in various idiomatic phrases as the following.—**to do or serve one a bad turn.** To act inimically toward, harm, injure —**to do one a good turn.** To befriend; act for one's benefit; help, aid —**to take turn or turns.** To act in an alternate manner, to follow in succession or a series

At length misfortunes take their turn to reign, And ills on ills succeed

YOUNG Paraphrase Job I, 204

—**to turn a cat in a pan.** See under CAT (p. 81).—**to turn a deaf ear.** To refuse to listen.

They . . . turn a deaf ear to their complaints.

R HALL Apology for the Freedom of the Press 45

—**to turn an honest penny.** To gain money honestly —**to turn in.** 1. To fold or double 2. To bend or incline inward 3. To deliver over; as, the drummer turns in heavy orders 4. To enter, particularly for hospitality; as, the men turned in unto Lot. 5. To help untidily; as, the boys turned in and gave him a lift 6. To go to bed; retire originally a seaman's phrase

(1) Thus a wise tailor is not pinching, But turns at every seam an inch in

SWIFT George-Nim-Dan-Dean's Ans 18.

(2) Go-ahead, a good mare . . . turns in her toes a little

The Daily News London, July 19, 1870

(4) Hearing your stable clock strike as I turned in at your gate

MISS TYTLER Blackhill Ghosts II, xv, 23.

—**to turn in one's grave.** To cause grief or annoyance to if alive, hence, be a source of trouble if it were known to the deceased person referred to

Jefferson might turn in his grave if he knew of such an attempt to introduce European distinctions of rank into his democracy BRYCE American Commonwealth I, xii, 159.

—**to turn off.** 1. To check or stop by operating a valve 2. To achieve by labor, accomplish; turn out, write 3. To deviate or cause to deviate, put aside, deflect. 4. To send away; dismiss from notice or care; reject; as, to turn off a servant 5. To hang, execute 6. To marry

(1) She did not turn off the gas at the meter L KEITH Lost Illusion II, xvi, 101

(2) Turning off 300 pages of fluent Latin PATTISON Milton IX, 108.

(3) He turned off, through a gate, into some ornamented grounds

WASHINGTON IRVING Sketch Book II.

(4) Pay him his wages and turn him off GOLDSMITH Good Natured Man I.

(5) The executioner has him upon the ladder and turns him off in an instant

CHAPPELLOW Right Way Rich 64.

(6) Lord Weymouth is to be married next Tuesday, or, as he said himself, to be turned off H WALPOLE Letter to G Montague May 16, 1759

—**to turn on or upon.** 1. To face in opposition or anger, antagonize; oppose. 2. To reply; retort 3. To report, to direct or aim

(1) But he [George IV] turned upon twenty friends He was fond and familiar with them one day, and he passed them on the next without recognition.

THACKERAY Four Georges.

—**to turn one's back on.** 1. To depart from; forsake, abandon. 2. To show one's disapproval of, repulse.

(1) I was purposed to have . . . turned my back upon Scotland while I had sene further.

EARL MORTON in Calr Scott Pap. VI, 14

—**to turn one's brain or head.** To affect one mentally, upset one's mind; disturb one's balance

You have been making serious love to Patty, and have turned the poor girl's head.

HUGHES Tom Brown at Oxford XXXV.

—**to turn one's coat.** See under COAT —**to turn one's hand to.** To apply oneself to; to go to work, to take up as an occupation.

He was ready to turn his hand to anything that might enable him to make a living.

SMILES Huguenots Eng II, 22.

—to turn one's stomach. To nauseate; to disgust one extremely.

Questions that would *turn the stomach* of a school inspector

*Temple Bar Magazine*, Sept., 1892.

—to turn out. 1. To assemble for duty or service, attend 2. To incline or cause to incline outward, as, *turn out your toes* 3. To put out; dismiss; eject 4. To cause to cease, stop, as, *turn out the light* 5. To effect by work or toil, accomplish, turn off 6. To prove in the result or issue; result, as, the day *turned out fair* 7. To strike or join a strike, as, all the brakemen *turned out* 8. To turn inside out, as, to *turn out a glove* 9. To go round; pass to one side; as, the team *turned out* on the left. 10. To put out to pasture, let go into the open, as, *turn out the cows*. 11. To get out of bed, rise, as, it is time to *turn out*

(1) One raven managed more than once to *turn out* the guard, who thought they were summoned by the sentinel BOSW SMITH in *Nineteenth Cent March*, 1903

(3) They will seize the first occasion to *turn* the Government out.

*Saturday Review* Dec. 17, 1892.

(5) A man who *turned out* books as a bricklayer *turns out* houses, or a tailor coats. LESLIE STEPHEN *Johnson* II, 16.

(6) Our expectation of Vesuvius *turned out* very well

BARONESS BUNSEN in *Hare's Life* II, 353

—to turn over. 1. (1) To invert; reverse. (2) To upset, overturn, as, the cabinet was accidentally *turned over* 2. To put in other control, transfer; as, the office will be *turned over* to the sheriff 3. To use or make use of in trade or exchange; as, capital should be *turned over* quickly 4. To examine or inspect minutely, as manuscripts 5. To turn from side to side, roll over —to turn over a new leaf. To change one's ways or conduct, make a change in one's manner of living; usually for the better or to economize —to turn tail. 1. To run away, turn back, retreat a term from falconry 2. To abandon, forsake

(1) He *turned tail* and fled

GWEN D. GALTON *La Fenton V.*

(2) [They] have *turned tail* upon their former faith JAMES AGNES *Sorel* I, 14

—to turn the tables. To rebut a charge by bringing a counter charge; to reverse one's position, to change conditions or relations —to turn to account. To utilize to advantage, make use of to one's profit —to turn turtle. To overturn or capsize, as a boat or vessel

We had not steamed three miles from that berg when it split in three portions with thunderous sounds, and every portion *turned turtle*

*The Daily Telegraph* London, Feb. 28, 1887

—to turn up. 1. To come to pass, occur, hence, to put in an appearance; show oneself, as, the bad penny *turned up* 2. To disinter, bring to the surface, as, the plow *turned up* myriads of beetles

You didn't expect me to *turn up* here, did you? W. F. NORRIS *Miss Shafte* 170

(2) A man digging a hole for a gate-post, *turned up* a golden ornament

JAMES DAVIDSON *Brit & Rom Remains, Axminster*, 27.

—to turn up trumps. To succeed, to turn out well; prove valuable —to turn up one's nose. To express disdain, dislike or contempt for

Mr Thrale *turned up his nose* with an expression of contempt

MME D'ARBLAY *Diary* Oct. 20, 1779

**turncoat.** One who changes his political affiliations for sordid or mercenary reasons; a renegade, an apostate.

The Chief Justice himself stood aghast at the effrontery of this venal *turncoat*

MACAULAY *History of England* VIII

**turn-out.** 1. An attendance in force; also, a parade; a gathering; especially, a crowd in the open air. 2. A coach or carriage and its equipments.

**turnpike.** [U. S.] A road on which tolls were charged to repay the cost of building, or for maintenance.

**turns, by.** In regular rotation; successively; one after another.

**turntail.** A renegade, coward; turncoat.

**Turbentine State.** [U. S.] North Carolina.

**twaddle, twattle, etc.** Idle chatter; stuff and nonsense; gabble, piffle; pibble-pabble. Hence, **twaddler**, one who twaddles, and **twaddling** or **twaddley**. Silly, loquacious, petty, paltry, trifling.

To be sure Cicero used to *twaddle* about Greek literature and philosophy, much as people do about ancient art now-a-days LOWELL *Fireside Travels*, 155

—**twattle-basket**. An idle chatterer; a twaddler

**twasome**. [Scot.] I. *a*. Same as **TWOSOME**. II. *n*. Two persons in company.

**tweak one by the nose** or **tweak one's nose**. To seize and pull one's nose with a jerk.

Now *tweak him by the nose*—hard, harder yet JONSON *Magnetic Lady* act III, sc 4

**tweedledum and tweedledee**. Two things which differ slightly. The phrase occurred about 1720, in the following lines referring to rival musicians.

Some say, compared to Bononcini,  
That Mynheer Handel's but a ninny;  
Others aver that he to Handel  
Is scarcely fit to hold a candle.  
Strange all this difference should be  
Twixt *Tweedledum* and *Tweedledee*

JOHN BYROM *On the Feud between Handel and Bononcini*

To the ears of Mopsy and Dopsy it was all *tweedledum* and *tweedledee*

MISS BRADDON *Mt Royal* II, x, 218.

**twenty and twenty**. A large but indefinite number. Compare with the Biblical *seventy times seven*.

I have hinted it to you *twenty and twenty* times by word of mouth

S RICHARDSON *Clarissa Harlowe* II, 145

The tallowchandlers such dutiful and loyal subjects that they don't care if there were *twenty and twenty* birthdays in a year, to help off their commodity

BROWN *Works* I, 153

**twiddle or twirl one's fingers or thumbs**. To waste one's time; to be without occupation; to finger lightly and idly: from turning the thumbs or fingers round and round one over the other, as in idleness.

Then he sat silent for a moment, staring into the fire, and *twiddling his thumbs*.

OLIPHANT *Poor Gentleman* IX.

**twig**. To understand, mark or observe; hence, **twiggez-vous?** Do you understand? Formed to imitate French.

I *twigged* at once that he didn't know himself what it meant

DR J BROWN *Spare Hours* I, 306.

"Now jump up, Pussy! Say, 'I think I'd better come to life!' Then we all take hands, etc *Twiggez vous?*" "*Nous Twiggons*"

KIPLING *Stalky and Company* 40

—to **hop the twig**. [Eng.] To die.—to **work the twig**. To use a divining-rod.

**twist the British lion's tail**. See under **TAIL**.

**twit**. To remind of something discreditable; taunt with; reproach; cast in one's teeth.

**two and two make four**. That can not be controverted; indisputable. Used to emphasize an undeniable and obvious statement.

The notion is as clear as that *two and two makes four*

COLLIER *Essays Mar Sub* II, 85.

**two and two together, to add, lay or put**. To combine several facts and draw from them a logical conclusion; to reason logically.

Putting *two and two together* . . . it was not difficult to guess who the expected Marquis was.

THACKERAY *Neuromes* XLIX.

**two-eyed steak.** [Brit.] A herring, either fresh or salted.

**twopenny damn.** Any insignificant thing. Erroneously connected with the *dawm*, a Hindu coin, and an imprecation attributed to Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington. See quotation.

Tradition asserts that Wellington once said he did not care a *twopenny-damn* what became of the ashes of Napoleon Buonaparte.

FARMER AND HENLEY *Slang and Its Analogues*.

**twopenny dump.** [Brit.] A very large globular sugar candy, usually flavored with peppermint, and sold for twopence. Used also in combination with other words, especially as an indication of indifference; as, "I don't care a *twopenny dump* about it." Compare TUCK OF DRUM.

**twopenny-halfpenny** (pronounced *tup'penny-ha'penny*). [Brit.] A thing of small value, an insignificant object; the equivalent of the United States *picayune* (q. v.), both representing five cents.

They had lost a law-suit, a *twopenny halfpenny* squabble about a trespass

H KINGSLEY *Hornby Mills* I, 30

**twopenny tube.** [Eng.] One of a series of tubular underground electric railways operated in London on which the original fare between points was two pence.

**two pun' ten or two upon ten.** [Brit.] A shop assistant's warning to other employees on noting a person of doubtful honesty, and meaning "two eyes upon ten fingers."

**twosome.** Participated in by two, as a Scotch reel or a game of golf. Also the dance or game. Compare TWASOME.

**two twos, in.** [Brit.] Without delay; in a very short time.

The business was over in *two twos* STEVENSON *New Arabian Nights* II, 112

**tympanitic.** Inflated; bombastic; turgid; fustian; high sounding; said of words or language.

We know nothing better in the main than his [Sedgwick's] demonstration of what is untrue, and his reduction of what is absurd, and his taking the wind out of what is *tympanitic*.

JOHN BROWN *Spare Hours* 56.

## U

**ubiquity of the king.** [Brit.] Omnipresence of royal authority, especially in the courts of law.

A consequence of this [the king's] prerogative, is the legal *ubiquity of the king*. His majesty, in the eye of the law, is always present in all his courts, though he cannot personally distribute justice

BLACKSTONE *Commentary* I, vii.

**ugliness.** [U. S.] Perversity; meanness; ill-nature.

**ugly.** Ill-tempered; angry; having a resentful disposition. Hence, to come the ugly. To threaten.—to cut up or look ugly. To show rage or resentment.

Captain Caldwell at once remarked to his men that these fellows *looked ugly* and *fighty*.

KENDALL *Santa Fe* I, 133.

—**ugly as sin.** Unsightly and repulsive; offensive to the eye.

Though I am as *ugly as sin*, I would not have you think me an ass.

SCOTT *Kenilworth* X.

—**ugly attitude.** An unpleasant or provocative or quarrelsome manner or demeanor.

—**ugly customer, opponent, etc.** A quarrelsome or dangerous person or animal.

—**ugly duckling.** An awkward, ungainly, and ill-looking child that develops into

the best looking and cleverest of a family of children: an allusion to the cygnet hatched with a brood of ducklings that was unadmired until it grew into a swan.

I never dreamed of so much happiness when I was still the *ugly Duckling*!

DULCKEN's transl of Hans Andersen's *Little Match Girl* 45

—**ugly temper.** A violent or ill-natured temper —**ugly tone.** A threatening or unpleasant tone.—**ugly weather.** Stormy or unpleasant weather

**unable to see a hole in a ladder.** [Brit.] To be intoxicated.

**unbeknown, unbeknownst.** Not known.

The same secret instinct . . . to sympathize . . . in praying for such a thing *unbeknown* to one another. GODWIN *Works* 111, 372

**unbosom oneself, to.** To disclose one's secrets or inner feelings; reveal to.

The rest of this winter I spent in a lonesome, solitary life, *having none to converse with, none to unbosom myself unto* T. ELLWOOD *Life* 227

**unchurched masses.** The population not regularly affiliated with any religious organization.

If the American churches can reach the *unchurched masses* of our cities they ought to do so JOSEPH COOK *Conscience Lectures* VII

**uncle.** 1. A pawnbroker.

(1) Brothers, wardens of City Halls,  
And *uncles*, rich as three golden balls  
From taking pledges of nations

HOOD *Miss Kilmansegg*

2. [U. S.] An old negro house-servant.

(2) There was an old nigger

And his name was *Uncle Ned*

STEPHEN FOSTER *Plantation Melodies*.

—**your Uncle or your Uncle Dudley.** Oneself: said by the person speaking in referring to himself.—**Uncle Sam.** The government or typical representative or citizen of the United States A name explained as arising from government stores purchased at Troy, N. Y., in the war of 1812 and marked U. S. The inspector in charge of them, Samuel Wilson, was popularly known as "Uncle Sam." But the story is denied by Albert Matthews in a monograph published in proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society (vol xix), who gives a number of early quotations, including the following:

Loss upon loss, and no ill luck string (sir) but what lights upon *Uncle Sam's* shoulders, exclaim the Government editors . . . This cant name for our government has got almost as current as "John Bull." The letters U S on the government waggons, etc., are supposed to have given rise to it. TROY [N Y] *Post*, Sept. 7, 1813

**unction to the soul, to lay a flattering.** To soothe oneself with a falsehood: from Shakespeare's phrase in *Hamlet*, act iii, sc. 4.

**under a cloud.** See under CLOUD.

**under bare poles.** Without spread of sail.

**under the canopy.** [U. S.] Under the heavens; under the skies; on earth.

How *under the canopy* did ye get here?

ROSE T. COOK *Huckleberries* 30.

**under the rose.** In strict confidence; secretly, privately. Cupid bribed

Harpocrates with a rose not to betray the amours of Venus, and thus the flower became an emblem of silence.

Being *under the rose* they had the privilege to speak all things with freedom

HOWELL *Parables* Times 147.

**under the weather.** Not well; indisposed; ill; sick.

As for the Frenchman, though now, between the valorous Poussin, and the long-faced Bonaparte, a little *under the weather?* D. G. MITCHELL *The Lorgnette* I, 50.

**under, to go.** To die; to be submerged by debt or trouble; hence, to disappear from society.

Mother Bunch's *gone under*, I s'pose. She was making fast for Golden Jerusalem when I was a bud. HUME *Crime of the Crystal* I

Poor John Weybridge, Esq., became as friendless as penniless, and eventually went *under* and was heard of no more. PAYN *High Spirits*.

**underbred.** [U. S.] Of mixed breed; not of a pure strain; lacking good breeding: a term from the stock farm applied also to human beings.

For we commonly say that a man has "the instincts of a gentleman," or that so and so is *underbred*. G. J. ROMANES *Mental Evolution in Animals* 193

**underground railway.** [U. S. Hist.] 1. An Abolitionist organization which assisted fugitive slaves in the Southern States to escape to the free soil States, or Canada, during the Civil War.

It is probable that nothing has awakened more bitterly the animosity of the slaveholding community than the existence, in the Northern States, of an indefinite yet very energetic institution, known as the *underground railway*. STOWE *Dred* II, 302

2. Means of communication between the Confederate Government and its adherents, and their friends in the United States. The phrase was also applied during the latter part of the Czarist regime in Russia to the line of communications maintained between Nihilist and other Revolutionary leaders in exile or in foreign countries with their followers in Russia. 3. [Brit.] The subterranean railway in London. See also TWPENNY TUBE. It corresponds to the American subways.

**undermanned.** [Naut.] Equipped with less than the full complement of men; short-handed.

Overloaded, *undermanned*, meant to founder, we  
Euchred God Almighty's storm, bluffed the Eternal Sea!

R. KIPLING *Ballad of the Bolivar*.

**understudy.** [Theat.] An actor or actress who has learned a more important role, and will play it in case the person to whom it is assigned is prevented from appearing by illness or some other reason. By extension, any one who may be called upon to undertake another's task at short notice.

**undertaker.** [Anglo-Irish.] An English or Scottish adventurer who undertook to hold Irish lands forfeited to the British crown in 1586 by the Earl of Desmond.

A regular stampede of men ambitious to call themselves *undertakers* began to cross over from the larger to the smaller island. EMILY LAWLESS *Story of Ireland* 229.

**underworld, the.** Debased mankind; the substratum or dregs of society; also, the nether world; Hades; the home of departed souls.

Our Lords on high,  
Who call the *underworld* of man  
An assish, mulish, packhorse clan.

PETER PINDAR (Wolcott) *Liberty's Last Squeak* III (1795).

**Union Jack, The.** The flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland before the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922.

The national banner of Great Britain and Ireland. It consists of three united crosses—that of St. George for England, the saltire of St. Andrew for Scotland, and the cross of St. Patrick for Ireland. BREWER *Phrase and Fable*

**universal Yankee nation.** [U. S.] The American people as a nation: used in spread-eagle oratory and highfalutin to emphasize the greatness of the American people.

[He was] a member of the *universal Yankee nation*

MR. ROOR of Ohio, Speech in the House of Representatives, Dec. 12, 1849.

**unlicked cub.** A clumsy or gawky person; hence, a sulky, awkward girl: from the popular error that bear cubs are mere lumps of flesh until licked into shape by their dams.

A country squire, with . . . a wife and two daughters . . . oh God! two such *unlicked cubs*. CONGREVE *Old Bachelor* act iv, sc. 8.

**unload.** [U. S.] 1. To get rid of, as a burden. 2. To sell, as stocks, shares, goods, etc., the holding of which would involve risk.

(1) I would be too smart to run another rancho in this country I would *unload* it on some tenderfoot  
VANDYKE *Milhonaires of a Day* 19

**unlock one's heart, a market, the resources.** 1. To give free access to; open up; make available. 2. To give free scope or range.

(1) Railroads, pushed in every direction, *unlock the resources* of new countries and bring their wealth to waiting markets  
GLADDEN *Applied Christianity* 3.

**unlock the lands.** [Australian.] Throw open for settlement tracts of land held by squatters on lease from the crown: a political slogan in Victoria.

**unmentionables.** [Brit.] Trousers, breeches: a Victorian euphemism with many variants.

The knees of the *unmentionables*, and the elbows of the coat, and the seams generally, soon began to get alarmingly white  
DICKENS *Sketches by Boz*.

**unreconstructed Southerner, Rebel, or Rebel Democrat.** [U. S. Hist.] A person not reconciled to the results of the Civil War.

Mr. Butler's committee reported in favor of extending for a month the time during which an *unreconstructed Southerner* may retain his Government employment.  
The Nation VIII, 221

**unspeakable.** Extremely poor or bad; also, abominable; detestable; horrible; stupid: a general intensive; as, an *unspeakable* play.

**unterrified and unwashed.** [U. S. Pol.] Not intimidated or dressed up: derisive phrases applied by Republicans to Democrats, who sometimes adopted the first adjective while resenting the second. Compare GREAT UNWASHED.

I take leave to say that I too am an *unterrified* Senator of the *unterrified* Commonwealth of Virginia MR ROANE Speech in the United States Senate Feb 15, 1839.

At this point a great portion of the *unwashed* as well as the *unterrified* left the hall  
Weekly Oregonian Jan 8, 1853

**unwritten law.** 1. Law which rests on judicial decision and custom, and not on written decree, command, or statute. 2. A local custom granting a measure of immunity to persons guilty of crimes of revenge, as in support of family honor, especially in cases of adultery, seduction, etc.

**up or up with, it's all.** The end has come; the game is over; the defeat is certain; all is lost.

I saw that *it was all up with* our animals.

BAKER *Heart of Africa* 259

**up and about.** Out of bed; clothed and moving around: used chiefly of early risers or convalescents.

**up-and-down.** 1. Vertical. 2. Of alternating fortune. 3. Positive; decided; emphatic; as, an *up-and-down* answer.

**upas.** 1. Something morally harmful or having evil influence; anything baneful or pernicious. A meaning derived from a tall Javanese tree that yields an acrid milky juice which contains a virulent poison, the *upas-anisar*. According to the Dutch surgeon, Foersch, about the close of the 18th century, the exhalations of this tree were fatal to both animal and vegetable life, so that birds flying over it fell dead, and a desert surrounded each tree. Since 1844 it has been cultivated in hothouses and botanic gardens with no ill effects, thus proving the story to be false. 2. The poisonous sap of two or three Malaysian trees, used by natives in the



manufacture of arrow-poison; especially, the **upas-antiar**, from the *upas-tree*, and the **upas-tieute**, from a climbing shrub (*Strychnos tieute*) of the *Loganiaceæ* family.

On the blasted heath

Fell *Upas* sits, the hydra-tree of death.

ERASMUS DARWIN *Loves of the Plants* III, 233.

**up a tree.** Shelved; cornered. See under **TREE**.

**Upper Crust.** The aristocratic class in society; the upper ten thousand: a designation said to have been derived from the practise in medieval times of placing the upper crust of a loaf of bread before the guest of honor at a banquet.

I want you to see Peel, Stanley, Graham, Shiel, Russell, Macaulay . . . . They are all *upper crust* here

HALIBURTON *The Attaché*, 1843-44.

**upper story.** The head; hence, the brain. Used in various idiomatic phrases as **cracked**, **gone**, or **weak in the upper story**.

His neighbor cast many a curious side-long glance at him . . . suspecting that all was not right with the *upper story*

JOHN SCOTT in Lockhart *Life of Sir Walter Scott* III, xi, 351.

Which you imagine to be the new light of grace I take to be a deceitful vapour glimmering through a *rock in your upper-storey*

SMOLLETT *Humphrey Clinker* I, 180

**upper ten or upper-ten thousand, the.** [U. S.] The well-to-do classes; the aristocracy; hence, the world of fashion: a phrase used by N. P. Willis in referring to the well-born and wealthy classes of New York estimated at that number, later cut down to four hundred.

The mothers of the *upper ten thousand* should put their nurseries under the control of a superior nurse

The *Athenæum* London, No 719, Nov. 1868

Most of these pseudo-aristocratic impostors had succeeded in obtaining admission to the party which became known among the rest of the prisoners as the *upper ten push*

MICHAEL DAVITT *Prison Diary* 1877.

**uppush, upputy.** 1. Given to self-assertiveness;umptious; pretentious; assuming; also, vain, proud, arrogant or stuck up.

Americans are too *uppush*, but when you get hold of a man who is accustomed to being down-trodden, it's easy to keep him so

STOCKTON *Merry Chantey* xvii

2. Intoxicated.

**ups and downs.** Changes as of fortune; literally, a succession of elevations and depressions; figuratively, prosperity and adversity.

The *ups and downs* of the rival parties furnished subjects for two excellent cartoons

The *Fortnightly Review* London, 1887.

Rode, by *ups and downs*, through many a grassy glade and valley.

TENNYSON *Enid* 9.

**upsee, upsey, or upsie.** Intoxicated: perhaps a corruption of "over sea" (as in the phrase *half seas over*) from the Dutch *opzee*; but Nares traces it from *opzyn fries*, which means, "in the Dutch fashion." When connected with the name of a people, *upsee* means "in the way or after the manner of" the people named (as, to drink *upsee* Dutch or *upsee* English), but *upsee* in such phrases has been understood by some as meaning a strong ale or beer In the quotation below *upsees* perhaps signifies healths.

Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with thy liquor,  
Drink *upsees* out, and a fig for the vicar

WALTER SCOTT *Lady of the Lake* can. vi, l. 6.

I do not like the dulness of your eye

It hath a heavy cast, 'tis *upsee* Dutch

BEN JONSON *Alchemist* iv, 6.

—**upsee-freeze or freeze.** A tippler's cant term for intoxicated.

For *upsee freeze* he drank from four to nine,

So as each sense was steeped well in wine.

The *Shrift* iii, 121.

**upset price.** A price at which property is offered by an auctioneer as the lowest selling price.

If no advance is made they [the goods] fall to the person who made the *upset price*  
BREWER *Phrase and Fable* p 1263

**upsides with.** [Brit.] To be even or quits with; to be a match for.

Nay, 'twarn't altogether spite, tho' I won't say but what I might ha' thought o'  
bein' *upsides wi'[th]* them HUGHES *Tom Brown at Oxford* xxxix.  
I'll be *upsides w'[th]* the man if it takes me fifty years to do it

PHILLPOTTS *Prophets* 346.

**upstart.** One who has risen suddenly from a humble position to one of consequence, and assumes an air of arrogance and is overbearing; especially, a person raised from poverty to sudden affluence, servitude to power, obscurity to notoriety, and becomes arrogant and conceited in consequence.

**up the flume or flue.** [U. S.] 1. Gone for good; worthless; ruined.

Well, then, that idea's *up the flume* MARK TWAIN *Stolen White Elephant* 97

2. Dead; vanished; departed: usually with *gone*.

**up the spout.** Pledged; in pawn. See under SPOUT.

**up to.** 1. To be incumbent upon; to rest with; as, it's *up to* you to decide. 2. Engaged in or intending to do; about; as, none of us knew what he was *up to*. 3. To be capable of or equal to—**up to anything.** Given to or ready for no matter what: usually implying frolic, mischief or devilry—**up to a thing or two.** Worldly wise; knowing, well-informed, also, shrewd, cunning, skilful  
See TO KNOW A THING OR TWO under KNOW

**up-to-date.** Abreast of the times; in the current of the most recent events; having the latest information.

**up to scent, snuff, the ropes.** Worldly wise; sharp; knowing; wide-awake.

**up to something.** Prepared to start something; carry a scheme into effect: used frequently of plans or projects which have been kept secret.

**up to the eyes.** See under EYES.

**up to the handle.** Completely engrossed; deeply involved; also, to the fullest extent.

**up to the mark.** In good health or condition; above the average: often used with a negative.

"Come, Balfour," said Mr Bolitho brightly, "have a glass of sherry and a cigar  
You don't look quite *up to the mark* this morning."

WM BLACK

There wouldn't be much excuse for me if I weren't *up to the mark*.

W. E. NORRIS *Rogue* ix.

**urchin.** 1. A hedgehog: the original meaning. 2. Hence, a mischievous child: an epithet of endearment or reproach.

"And who's blind now, mamma?" the *urchin* cried

PRIOR *Venus Mistaken*

3. An elf; a fairy or sprite. 4. A sea-urchin.

**urge, cosmic.** Universal force.

**used to anything, like an eel to skinning.** Accustomed to suffering: an ironical phrase applied to a painful experience that must be undergone a second time.

It ain't always pleasant to turn out for morning chapel, is it, Gig-lamps? But it's  
just like the eels with their skinning—it goes against the grain, but you soon get used  
to it CUTHBERT BEDE *Verdant Green* vii

**used up.** [U. S.] Tired out; wearied to exhaustion; worn out; discouraged.

**use for, to have no.** [U. S.] To dislike or feel indifferent toward a person or thing; often employed as an exclamation of impatience.

*I have no use for him—don't like him*

*Transactions of the American Philological Association.*

**utilitarian philosophy.** A system which teaches that the most important thing is the greatest good of the greatest number, invented by Bentham and taught by J. S. Mill.

The pursuit of such happiness is taught by the *utilitarian philosophy*, a phrase used by Bentham himself in 1802, and therefore not invented by Mr J. S. Mill, as he supposed, in 1823

*Encyclopedia Britannica XXVII, 821.*

**Utopia.** Literally, "nowhere"; hence, any imaginary place, from the title of Sir Thomas More's book (1516) describing a state which enjoyed perfection of law, government, etc. Sometimes erroneously spelled *Eutopia* as if from Greek *eu*, good, and *topos*, place.—**Utopian.** Imaginary; chimerical.

**utter, quite too utterly.** See TOO TOO. This phrase, with many variants, is a general intensive of the superlative degree; sometimes used ironically.

*I likes a merry little flutter,*

*I keeps a Dado on the sly,*

*In fact my form's the blooming utter.* HENLEY *Culture in the Slums* III.

## V

**V or V-spot.** [U. S.] A five dollar note or bill. Compare SPOT.

**vac.** [Brit. School & Univ.] Vacation.

*I shall have all the rest of the Vac to perpend and meditate on that point.*

BISHOP CREIGHTON in *Mrs Creighton's Life*.

**vacant-eyed.** Devoid of expression; apparently devoid of thought.

*When a person is lost in thought, with his mind absent, or, as it is sometimes said, "when he is in a brown study," he does not frown, but his eyes appear vacant*

DARWIN *Emotions* 228.

**vacant-hearted.** Unfeeling; callous.

**vacant looking or minded.** Having an unintelligent look; stupid; foolish.

*We all heard he was engaged to your beautiful vacant-looking cousin.*

MME. D'ARBLAY *Camilla* III, 219.

*I have been saddened by the vacant-minded pupil*

J. MACKENZIE *Day Down Dark Places* 272.

**vacant mind or brain.** A brain or mind devoid of thought or reflection, an empty head.

*Absence of occupation is not rest,*

*A mind quite vacant is a mind distress'd.*

*The loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind.*

COWPER *Retirement*.

GOLDSMITH *Deserted Village*.

**vacuum.** A state of emptiness; hence, a void.

*The vacuum occasioned by my mother's death.*

MARRYAT *Frank Mildmay* IX.

*They filled up the vacuum of the unrecorded past*

GROTE *Greece* I, xvi, 294.

**vade-mecum.** [L.] Anything that is carried on the person for constant use, as a manual, guide-book, etc.: literally, "go with me."

*All these things will be specified in time,*

*With strict regard to Aristotle's rules,*

*The vade mecum of the true sublime,*

*Which makes so many poets and some fools.*

BYRON *Don Juan* I, cci.

**vag.** I. n. [Brit.] Turf or peat used as fuel.

You can cut as much *vag*—or peat, as you calls it up country—as you'm a mind to.  
G. MORTIMER *Tales of the Moors* 224.

II. v. [U. S.] To deal or treat with one as a vagabond.

I was arrested as a vagrant. As the popular expression went, I got "vagged."  
C. ROBERTS *Adrift America* 169

**vain, to take in.** To use or utter lightly, needlessly or profanely the name of God. See *Exodus XX, 7*.

Who, never naming God except for gain,  
So never took that useful name in vain. TENNYSON *Sea Dreams* 185.

**valedictory, or valedictory oration.** [U. S.] The farewell address of a senior class, delivered at commencement by a student called the **valedictorian**, who is chosen for merit; hence, by extension, any farewell address.

**vale of misery, sorrow, tears, trouble, etc.** The earth as the path of life; hence, the trials or tribulations endured during life on earth.

Though life's valley be a *vale of tears*  
A brighter scene beyond that vale appears COWPER *Conversation* 881

**vale of years.** Old age; the decline of life.

That venerable potentate and pontiff is sunk deep into the *vale of years*.  
BURKE *Letters Regarding Peace, Works* VIII, 310

**valet.** [Fr.] A male bodyservant or personal attendant: in full, **valet de chambre**.

Which would not end till "France" (La France, as she named her royal valet) finally  
mustered heart to see Choiseul CARLYLE *French Revolution* I, I, 1

—**valet de place.** A tourists' guide; cicerone

I asked a *valet de place* at Meurice's what people were generally going to (for amusement)  
RUSKIN *Time and Tide* 62

**valley of the shadow of death.** A place of the deepest peril, gravest danger, severest grief. See under **SHADOW**.

Yea, though I walk through the *valley of the shadow of death*, I will fear no evil: for  
thou art with me Psalms XXIII, 4

**valorization.** [U. S.] 1. The fixing or maintenance of a price for any article of consumption, especially one in which the cost of production fluctuates 2. Fiscal government support, as of a commodity, with regulations for its sale, so as to provide for its continued production Specifically the buying of a commodity by a government from its citizens at a price sufficient to repay the cost of production, and to warrant its continued production, where, if the commodity were placed in the open market, the price commanded would be such as to result in a severe loss to the producers: applied especially to the Brazilian coffee-growing industry.

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary*

A loan of 15,000,000*l* sterling was issued, the proceeds to be applied to operations for the protection of coffee Large crops have interfered with the *valorisation* scheme.

SCOTT KELLIE *Statesman's Year-Book 1911, Brazil* p. 666.

**value, to good.** [Brit.] At low cost or for a small price; at a bargain.

He shew'd me some very rare and curious bookes, and some MSS which he had purchas'd to *good value* EVELYN *Diary*, July 14, 1700.

**value on or upon, to set much or little.** To consider the worth of.

Wolsey *set much value upon* the study of Greek.

J. H. BLUNT *The Reformation of the Church of England* I, 64.

**vamose, vamoose.** [U. S.] To leave quickly; depart, clear out. Corrupted from the Spanish *vamos*, "let's go!" "go on!" "beware!" used in the imperative for "go!" "get off with you!" "get out!" Hence, to

**vamose the ranch**, to leave precipitately: get away quickly; disappear; decamp.

The hunter was voted a fraud . . . and was . . . told to "vamoose"

J. G. MILLAR's *Breath from Veldt* 175.

I got that far when the eyes of the old galoots started out of their heads, and they vamosed the ranche.

E. B. CUSTER *Tenting on the Plains* I, 32.

**vamp, n.** 1. A gaiter or legging worn as a protection from mud. 2. The piece of leather that forms the upper front part of a boot or shoe. 3. Formerly, the protective piece at the front of a fireman's hat. 4. One who blows a vamping-horn. 5. A volunteer fireman: from the vamping-horn used to give instructions at a fire. See quotation

The word *vamp* as applied to firemen comes from the speaking-trumpet which their chief carried and used in directing his men

*The Evening Telegram* Feb. 15, 1923.

6. Something added to an old thing to give it a new appearance. 7. *Mus.* Any single improvised accompaniment. 8. One who makes a showy appearance or is given to swaggering, boasting or vaunting —**vamp, vt** [U S]. 1. To coquet or flirt with; also, to insinuate oneself into the good will of. 2. To allure; captivate; decoy entice; inveigle. 3. To prey upon —**vamp, n** [U S] A flirt or coquet. See **VAMPIRE**, 2.

—**vamper, n** To make a showy appearance, vapor, swagger —**vamper**. 1. One who stitches on the vamp or fore part of the shoe or boot. 2. One who pieces up old things as new; a cobbler. 3. *Mus.* One who improvises accompaniments, especially on the piano —**vamping-horn** or **trumpet**. [Eng.] An ancient musical instrument like a speaking-trumpet, formerly used by a choir-master in leading the choir.

One of the strange instruments of the old choirs is the *vamping-trumpet*. . . That at Willoughton [Lincolnshire] is six feet long

*The Evening Sun* New York, Feb. 22, 1910, p. 4, col. 6.

—**vampire, n.** 1. *Folk-lore* A ghostly being that sucks the blood of the living while they are sleeping. 2. Figuratively (1) One who insinuates himself or herself into the confidence of fellow creatures so as to prey upon them. (2) One who allures, fascinates or entices. 3. A bat of South or Central America, that sucks the blood of man, horses, cattle, and other warm-blooded animals, especially when they are asleep. 4. A flying fox. 5. *Theat* A small double trap-door whose leaves are held in position by springs, through which a player may pass suddenly

**van, vanguard.** The foremost division of an army or naval force when advancing or in formation for an advance; hence, to lead, bear or have the van, to have the place of honor as well as of danger.

The chief of men is he who stands in the *van* of men

CARLYLE *Past and Present* III, viii.

As when the *vanguard* of the Roman legions first saw it from the top of yonder hill.

LONGFELLOW *Golden Legend* I, *Castle of Vautsberg*.

**vandal.** A ruthless plunderer; a destroyer or despoiler: from the Vandals, a Teutonic race that in the fifth century ravaged Gaul, Spain, Rome and settled in northern Africa whence their kingdom was overthrown by Belisarius in 533.

**vanity.** Conceit; ambitious display; ostentation; show. —**vanity bag, box, case.** A bag, box, or case in which women may carry mirrors with powder-puffs, rouge, powder, lip-sticks for artificial adornment, etc —**Vanity Fair.** The world of fashion as a scene of vanity and folly: from Bunyan's allegorical town "Vanity" in *Pilgrim's Progress*

The last scene of her dismal *Vanity Fair* comedy was fast approaching.

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* xxv.

**vantage, the coign, place or point of.** A corner, place or point which gives its possessor an advantage, or superiority.

It was unfortunate that the possession of Sluys had given Alexander such a *point of vantage*

MOTLEY *Netherlands* XXVII.

**vantage, to catch, have, hold or take at a or the.** To have a superiority over one's opponent in a competition; to have at advantage.

He will *take* a weak man *at the vantage*.

SIR JOHN HARRINGTON *Metamorphosis of Ajax* 12

**vantage-ground.** A basis or ground that may be used advantageously for attack or defense.

A means of fresh attack with new *vantage ground*

HERSCHEL *Stud. Nat. Phil.* II, v, 173.

**vapor.** I. *n.* Boastful talk; swagger; bluster, ostentatious or windy talk. II. *v.* To indulge in boastful talk; brag; bluster.

His design was, if he could not refute them, yet at least with quips and snapping adages to *vapor* them out

MILTON *Apology for Smectymnus*.

**vapors.** A neurotic disorder; hypochondria; hysteria, depression: sometimes with the definite article; as,

Don't give your Royal brain the *vapours*

By opening Opposition papers.

PRAED *Poems* 12.

Sometimes, thro' pride, the sexes change their airs;

My lord has *vapours*, and my lady swears. YOUNG *Love of Fame* iii, 136.

**variance with, at.** In a state of disagreement, difference or conflict with; hence, to **set at variance**, to cause to be at odds or in disagreement.

Arms . . . in whatever cause,

Seem most *at variance* with all moral good.

COWPER *Task* IV, 621.

To disguise our passions,

To *set* our looks *at variance* to our thoughts.

ADDISON *Cato* act 4, sc. 4.

**variously.** [U. S.] At different times.

Samuel Perkins kept a barber shop *variously* under the National Hotel and the Clinton Bank.

A. E. LEE *Hist of Columbus, Ohio* I, 756.

**varlet.** A man of mean or rascally disposition; a rogue; scoundrel; low fellow. Hence, **varletry**, the lower classes; the mob or rabble.

Was not this a seditious *varlet* to tell them this to their beards

LATIMER *Serm Bef Edward VI*, iii

A handsome boy . . . but a mischievous *varlet*.

WASHINGTON IRVING *Bracebridge Hall* viii.

The shouting *varlet*ry of censuring Rome.

SHAKESPEARE *Antony and Cleopatra* act ii, sc. 4.

**varmin, varmint.** A corruption of VERMIN, used for a troublesome person, child, or animal from a field-mouse to a deer or panther.

"I've got the young *varmint* at last, have I," pants the farmer.

HUGHES *Tom Brown* II, iv.

"These beavers," said he, "are the knowingest *varmin*s I know."

WASHINGTON IRVING *Tour Prairies* xxiii.

Poor Tom was once a kiddy upon the town,

A thorough *varmint* and a real swell,

Full flash, all fancy.

BYRON *Don Juan* XI, xvii.

**'varsity.** [Brit.] University.

We'll dance at the '*Varsity* Ball.

QUILLER-COUCH in *Echoes from the Oxford Magazine* 105.

**vaudeville.** *n.* 1. A theatrical entertainment or dramatic sketch interspersed with songs and dances, or a variety show consisting of a series of short sketches, songs, dances, acrobatic feats, etc

A *vaudeville*, in the French sense of the term, means a comedy of a more or less farcical order, in which a certain number of songs, ballads—rarely concerted numbers—usually incidental and without particular reference to the action, have been, so to speak, inserted. REGINALD DE KOVEN in *Chicago Herald* Feb. 11, 1894, p. 27.

2. A topical modern French song or street ballad with refrain. 3. Originally, a sprightly song composed by Oliver Basselin (died 1418) born in the Vau or Val de Vire, in Normandy.

In all these light compositions, which gallantry or gayety inspired, we perceive the characteristic excellences of French poetry as distinctly as in the best *vaudeville* of the age of Louis XV. HALLAM *Lit Europe* vol. i, pt. i, p. 41.

A word of French origin from *vau de Vire*, valley of the Vire river, in Normandy, France.

**veil, the.** The life of a nun,—to take the veil. To become a nun; to enter a convent as a novice.

Then it . . . became a large and flourishing convent, the wife of Baldwin I. having taken the veil there LADY HERBERT *Cradle Lands* III, 103

One who . . . had a right to make a choice between the world and the veil. SCOTT *Castle Dangerous* xiv.

—to pass beyond the veil. To cross the bourne beyond which there is no return; to die.

When you and I beyond the Veil are past.

FITZGERALD'S translation of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* xlvii.

—within the veil. Into the inner temple, in allusion to the curtain screening the Holy of Holies in a Temple or Tabernacle.

Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. Hebrews VI, 19.

**veil over, to draw, throw or cast a.** To conceal, hide, suppress; to keep from public knowledge, to decline to discuss.

There was evidence of proceedings having been enacted over which I would rather draw a veil GREENER *Gunnery* 351

He throws a veil of mystery over the origin of the decline. JOWETT *Plato* III, 109

**vein.** 1. A temporary state of mind; a humor; mood. Usually in the phrase, *in the vein*.

I like to hear them when I am *in the vein*

GEORGE MEREDITH *Egoist* xxxiv.

2. A specific tendency or cast of mind; a quality peculiar to a person; as, a classical or poetical vein.

**velvet, to be on.** To be in a pleasant, remunerative, or satisfactory position.

We stand on velvet as to finance. SCOTT *Journal* Feb. 23, 1828.

Is that what you call being on velvet when you are sure to win something? Yes. The Daily News London, June 1, 1897, p. 3.

Men who have succeeded in these speculations, especially on the turf, are said to be on velvet Slang Dictionary (1874), p. 334.

**vener.** I. n. A superficial appearance or outward show of some good quality.

A savage barbarian with a thin veneer of corrupt and superficial civilization.

FARRAR *Christ* I, iv, 44.

II. v. To invest with the appearance of a quality that pleases or attracts.

Another lady of neglected education, whom . . . Elizabeth was veneering with thin plates of knowledge HOLME LEE *Basil Godfrey's Caprice* LXVI.

**vengeance, with a.** With unusual force or violence; to a great extent or degree: an intensive, in earlier usage, a curse or malediction.

Here, at any rate, are materials enough with a vengeance.

MATTHEW ARNOLD *Celtic Literature* 29.

Why not quit literature—with a vengeance to it—and turn, were it even to sheep herding? CARLYLE quoted by Froude in *Life in London* I, 70.

**ventilate a subject, character, question, etc.** To make known or expose for public consideration or discussion; bring into public notice.

Those friends who were, to use a barbarous expression, ventilating the question.

BEACONSFIELD *Selected Speeches* II, 325.

**venture, at a.** At random, without due consideration or thought.

A certain man drew bow at a *venture*.

1 *Kings* xxi, 34.

**venture of, to run the.** To take the chance.

To run the *venture* of the gallows rather than the *venture* of starving.

De Foe *Captain Singleton* xv.

**venture on or upon.** To attempt or undertake something difficult or dangerous.

The third is his slowness in taking a jest.

Should you happen to *venture upon* one.

LEWIS CARROLL *Hunting the Snark*.

**venue.** The scene of a real or supposed event or act or a position assumed by one engaged in a controversy.

Sterne would have done better to have laid the *venue* of his sentimentalities over a dead ass in Spain rather than in France.

FORD *Handbook of Spain* I, 46

**verbiicide.** One who destroys or mutilates a word or perverts its meaning; or the act of doing any one of these things.

Homicide and *verbiicide*—that is, violent treatment of a word with fatal results to its legitimate meaning—are alike forbidden

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* I, 10.

It is this laziness in speaking which makes them (Australians) grow up habitual *verbiicides*

The *Melbourne Argus* Jan 10, 1894.

**verge of, on the or to the.** On the point of doing something, on the brink or border of.

Twice she was on the *verge* of telling all

His senses wandering to the *verge* of death

INGHAM *Poor Nellie* 91

HOMER *Iliad* xv, 14, POPE's trans

**verity, of a.** Assuredly, in truth, indeed.

Oh, Mahomet, of a *verity* thou art the prophet of God

WASHINGTON IRVING *Mahomet* vi, 33.

**verneuk, verneuker.** [S. Afr.] I. n. A cheat; a swindler.

The assistant librarian from the British Museum testified that *verneuker* meant swindler

East London *Dispatch* Nov. 23, 1911.

II. v. To cheat; deceive.

The practice of *verneukering* by which buyer and seller sought to get the better of each other

SIR J. ROBINSON *A Life Time in South Africa* p 185.

—*verneukerie*: The practises of *verneukers*

**vert.** [Brit.] A contraction of *pervert* or *convert*—one who transfers allegiance from one church to another.

Old friends call me a *pervert*, new acquaintances a *convert*, the other day I was addressed as a *vert*

Experience of a *Vert* in *The Union Review* May, 1864.

**very.** Exactly; also, extremely. Primarily, the true or real; that which is truly or properly entitled to the name: used as a general intensive.—

the **very thing.** The exact requisite; that which is suitable.

In the *very* next page.

STERNE *Tristram Shandy* IX, XXV

Three of the *very* richest subjects in England. MACAULAY *History of England* III, i, 308

Oh! I see, *negus* too strong here—liberal landlord—*very* foolish, *very*.

DICKENS *Pickwick* III.

**vestal.** A woman of pure unspotted character; chaste woman; a virgin.

How happy is the blameless *vestal's* lot!

The world forgetting by the world forgot

POPE *Eloisa to Abelard* 207

She was the most hospitable and jovial of old *vestals*, and had been a beauty in

her day.

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* X

**vestibule.** 1. The porch of a door or an enclosed or partly enclosed space in front of a building, an entrance- or fore-court. 2. An entrance hall or lobby.—**vestibule train.** [U. S.] A railway train in which the cars are connected by completely enclosed *passage-ways*, making for the additional comfort and safety of passengers; corridor-trains.



**veto.** The right to forbid or refusal to approve a legislative enactment.—to place, put, or set a veto on or upon. To check or prevent the accomplishment of.

They were much displeased at my immediately *placing a veto upon* their bloody intentions  
BAKER *Nile Tributaries* XV, 255.

**Veto, Monsieur and Madame.** Louis XVI, King of France, and his queen, Marie Antoinette: so called in derision during the early stages of the French Revolution, because the King was allowed a veto on the decrees of the National Assembly. Later, before their decapitation, they were styled Citizen and Citizeness Capet.

**vexed question, business, matter, etc.** A matter debated at length or subjected to a long discussion: used variously. See quotations.

Be that as it may, and not *vexing a question* (settled forever without our votes), let us own that he was, at least, a . . . gentleman BLACKMORE *Lorna Doone* XLI.

Upon this point I must join issue with him, with Stanley, and with others who have *vexed the subject*. R F BURTON in *The Athenaeum* London, Nov 3, 1877.

**vial.** A small vessel or bottle of glass or other material for containing liquids: used allegorically in many phrases, as the *vials full of the wrath of God*.

And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden *vials full of the wrath of God*, who liveth forever and ever REVELATIONS XV, 7.

Everywhere sensuality, division, hatred, treachery, cruelty, uncertainty, terror; the *vials of God's wrath* poured out. KINGSLAY *Hypatia* XVII.

**via media.** A middle path; an intermediate course.

It must be unconditional surrender, or the last attempt at conciliation. There was no *via media*, seeing that money was not to be found

MRS LYNN LINTON *Paston Carew* XXXIV.

**Vicar of Bray.** A turncoat: a political or religious trimmer; any one who changes his beliefs or principles to accommodate them to the times or circumstances; in modern usage, an opportunist.

From a vicar of the village of Bray in Berkshire, England, who repeatedly changed his religion with the changes of government, and who is the subject of the ballad *The Vicar of Bray*, supposedly written by a soldier in Colonel Fuller's regiment during the reign of George I. The identity of the vicar is uncertain, some authorities giving him as Simon Aleyn, who was vicar from 1540 to 1588, and others as Simon Simonds of the same vicarage, who died in 1551 FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary*.

And this is the law I will maintain

Until my dying day, Sir:

That whatsoever King may reign,

I'll still be *vicar of Bray*, Sir!

*Ballad of the Vicar of Bray.*

**vicehunter.** [U. S.] Any one who specializes in sociological studies in the vicious or poorer quarters.

**vice-squad.** [U. S.] Plain-clothes detectives in charge of the suppression of illegal traffic in narcotics, gambling, and prostitution.

**vice-versa.** [L.] Contrariwise, conversely, with a reversal or transposition of the items in a statement just made.

The larger he (the pike) is, the coarser the food, and so *vice versa*. BEST *Angling* 42.

**view.** Intellectual survey or mental inspection; hence, estimate; opinion.

—in view of. In anticipation; with a view to, on account of.

In *view of* the readiness she showed to second my search, all was, or appeared to be, forgiven. T. HOPE *Anastatius* II, 160.

—on view. Open to the public; ready for public inspection.—private view, A display of works of art restricted to a particular class of persons, as connoisseurs, critics, friends,

etc.—to have in view. To keep in the mind as a purpose or an event—to the view. To the public gaze.—view halloo. [Brit.] The huntsman's call when a fox breaks cover: a hunting phrase.—with a view to. In relation to, with regard to; in view of. With a view to his approaching nuptials: Lord Castleton presented him with a handsome service of plate. ELEANOR SLEATH *Bristol Evening* V, 329

**vigil.** The eve of a festival or holy day; hence, to keep a vigil or vigils, to keep a devotional or religious watch.

These holy days were commonly ushered in by a *vigil* or religious watching.

J. H. NEWMAN *Parochial Sermon* III, xxi.

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep;

Full seldom may my friend such *vigils* keep.

COLERIDGE *Dejection* VIII.

**vigilance committee.** [U. S.] A body of men self-organized for the maintenance of order and the administration of summary justice in communities where regular authority is lacking or is inefficient.

The first man hanged by the San Francisco *Vigilance Committee* was dead before he was swung up and the second was alive after he was cut down.

JOHN WILLIAMSON PALMER *The New and the Old* 73.

**vigilante.** [Sp. Am.] One who belongs to a vigilance committee.

**villainy, to do a.** To do that which will discredit or disgrace a person.

Pay her the debt you owe her, and undo the *villainy* you have done her.

SHAKESPEARE *2 Henry IV* act II, sc. 1.

**vim.** [U. S.] Force; vigor; go; pep; energy.

With a *vim* and determination that sometimes makes victory half assured.

*The New York Herald* April 17, 1875.

**vine and fig-tree, to dwell under one's own.** To live in one's own home.

And then eat ye every man of his own *vine*, and every one of his own *fig tree*, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern. II *Kings* xviii, 31.

**vinegar-faced, hearted, etc.** Sour-visaged and bitter-tempered; of acrid disposition.

*Vinegar-faced* Joseph projected his head from the round window of the barn

E. BRONTË *Wuthering Heights* II

**vineyard, laborers in the.** Churchmen. See quotation.

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire *labourers* into his *vineyard*. Matthew XX, 1.

**vintage wine.** Wine made from the grape crop of a certain district in a good year, and kept separate because of its superiority.

**violence to, to do.** To inflict harm or injury on; to outrage or violate.

I make no question, but that in the violence of the *Triumvirate*, he did much *Violence* to himself.

DRYDEN *St. Evremont's Essays* 93

**violent hands on or upon, to lay.** To use physical force in seizing, taking possession of, or in injuring, controlling or intimidating others.

What guilt is theirs who, in their greed or spite,

Undo thy work with *violent hands*.

BRYANT *The Path*, 79.

**violent language, phrase, writings, etc.** Words of extreme emphasis, indicating strong feeling; blasphemy; profanity.

The temperament which mistakes strong expression for strong judgment, and *violent phrase* for strong conviction.

MORLEY *Voltaire* 5.

**violin, to play first.** To take a leading part.—to play second violin.

To take a subordinate or insignificant part in. Sometimes also used with *fiddle*.

**viper.** A malignant or venomous person: from the adder, the only venomous snake in Great Britain and abundant in Europe, in allusion

to the story of the man who warmed a frozen viper in his bosom, and was bitten by it for his pains when it was revived

Thou painted *viper*! Beast that thou art! Fair and yet terrible! *SHELLEY Cenci*.  
The Newcastle had been in terror lest they had raised a *viper* in their midst.

RIKER *Lord Holland* I, iii, 164.

**virgin earth, forest, rock, soil, etc.** Earth, forest, rock, soil, etc. not touched by the hand of man, and still in a state of nature: used widely in figurative senses.

Hence the astonishing fertility of all new soil, or what is called *virgin earth*.

J. ROBERTSON *Agricultural Perth*. 280.

No event, no speech or article, ever falls upon a perfectly *virgin soil*

BRYCE *American Commonwealth* III, lxxvi, 6

**Virginia fence, to make a.** [U. S.]. To be so intoxicated as not to be able to walk straight: from the sinuous lines of the fences in Virginia.

He being drunk *makes a Virginia fence*

BEN FRANKLIN *Works* II, 26

**Virginia reel.** An old English country-dance, so called in the United States, and known in Britain as the *Sir Roger de Coverley*.

**virtu.** Rare, curious or beautiful. Used specifically in the phrase **article or objects of vertu.** Curious or rare objects of interest to collectors, etc.—**man of vertu.** A collector of curios or one interested in the rare curios or beautiful in art.

There are few things about which *men of vertu* are more apt to rave, than the merits of Grecian architecture

JEFFREY in *Edinburgh Review*, May 31, 1811

**virtue of, by or in.** By the power or authority in or of something; because of, in consequence of.

The refugees who retired *by virtue of* the treaty from Amphipolis, found shelter at Eion

THIRLWALL *Greece* III, 287.

**virtue of, to make a.** To gain credit for or make a merit of.

Mat, who saw Furlong was near the mark, thought he might . . . *make a virtue of* telling him

LOVER *Handy Andy* XIII.

**virtue of necessity, to make a.** To pretend to do willingly that which can not be avoided; to submit to circumstance with a good grace.

**virtues, cardinal.** The four principal virtues, rated in pagan philosophy as justice, prudence, temperance, fortitude. To these, also called **natural virtues**, are added, to make the **seven virtues**, the three **theological virtues** of faith, hope and charity

**visible, the.** Anything that may be seen but in particular, the world as revealed to the senses.

In his operations in the material universe, God has seen fit . . . to make known to us the invisible by the *visible*

J. GILBERT *Christian Atonement* IV, 102.

**visit.** To send or come upon, as good or evil; overtake. Specif.: (1) To overtake or afflict, as with disease or calamity; as, *visited* with gout. (2) To send or inflict punishment for or upon; requite; especially, in Scriptural usage, to send divine judgment upon as chastisement or as punishment. (3) Also, to benefit, comfort, or bless; as, the Lord hath *visited* his people.

(1) I will *visit* their sin upon them

Deuteronomy XXXII, 34.

(2) *Visit* him with thy salvation

Book of Common Prayer.

**visit, to, or to make or pay, or to return a visit.** To make a formal or friendly call upon, or to return such a call.

**vitriolic.** Caustic; sulphurous; hence, malignant, ill-natured.

Venting a flood of *vitriolic* sarcasm, or a flight of high toned poetry.

H. F. CHORLEY *Music and Manners in France and Germany* III, 31.

**vixen.** A shrew or quarrelsome woman; a scold; a termagant.

**voice, in or out of.** Capable of singing or of speaking well or poorly.

I am afraid my wife is quite *out of voice*

EDNA LYALL *We Two* XXVI.

**voice in, to have or bear a.** To have a say in deciding something; to share in control, government or deliberations.

The parishioners *had more voice in* the matter than they have now

JESSOP *Coming of the Friars* IV, 185.

**voice, the public.** Public opinion; popular rumor or report.

The *public voice* . . . seldom reaches to a brother or husband, though it rings in the ears of all the neighborhood.

FIELDING *Tom Jones* III, vii.

**void, null and.** [Legal Cant.] Not binding in law; of no legal force; invalid.

**void, to fill the.** To fill a vacancy, or an empty space.

All the tricks that idleness has ever yet contriv'd to fill the void of an unfurnished brain

COWPER *Task* IV, 209.

**volte-face.** An entire change of face or front; a reversal, as of policy or attitude.

Nothing in the last two years had happened to justify the conference in executing a *volte face*.

*Journal of Education* 1887.

**volumes, to speak.** To testify eloquently to or for; also, be highly expressive.

Something which *speaks volumes* in favour of the King.

FREEMAN *Norman Conquest* (1877) I, vi, 444.

**Volunteer State.** [U. S.] Tennessee.

**voodoo.** *Folk-lore.* 1. The superstitions (collectively) prevalent among West-Indian and southern United States creoles, mulattoes, and negroes, and dealing with charms, conjury, snake-worship, and witchcraft, and, according to some, in their more degraded forms, with cannibalism and human sacrifice. 2. A conjurer supposed to have power or skill in such practices. Known also as **voodoo doctor** or **priest**, or, if preeminent in a locality, **v. king** or **queen**. 3. *pl.* Those who practise voodoo rites and orgies; voodooists

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dict.*

The witch-woman and voodoo-priest became the centre of Negro group life

Du Bois *Souls Black Folk* X, 198.

**vote.** To exercise the right of suffrage; hence, to **vote down**, to defeat; **vote in**, to elect.—**vote-beggar**, **-seeker.** One who solicits or seeks votes —**vote-catcher**, **getter.** One who attracts votes.

**vote, to take a.** To get the sense of a legislative or other deliberative body by formal reference.

**vouch for.** To give one's personal assurance; to become sponsor for.

A very clear account, truly! and I dare swear the Lady will *vouch for* every word of it.

SHERIDAN *School for Scandal* act iii, sc. 3.

**vows, to exchange.** To be married, or to become betrothed.

They stood before the altar and their *vows were exchanged*.

LYTTON *Disowned* XXVII.

**vows, to take the.** To enter a religious order.

On his friends earnestly pressing him to *take the vows*, he ran away.

S AUSTIN's transl of RANKE *Hist. Ref*

**voyageur.** *n.* [F.] An employee of the Hudson Bay and Northwest Companies, engaged in carrying men, goods, and supplies between the trading-posts on the interior lakes and rivers; also, a Canadian boatman, or a fur-trader of the Northwest. FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dict*  
Ascending the Mississippi, the canoes reached lake Pepin on the 17th of September, where the *voyageurs* established themselves and constructed a fort on the north side,

called by them fort Beauharnois . . . About this date [1727] this word came into use to take the place of the term *coureurs de bois* to which disrepute began to be attached.

KINGSFORD *Canada* vol. iii, bk. x, p. 270.

**vulture.** A greedy, rapacious person: a sense derived from the habits of the large birds of prey that feed on carrion.

The nation seems preyed upon by the *cultures* of greed and superstition.

MACFADEYEN in *Congreg. Year Book*, 1883.

Before midnight I was in a high fever, they sent for the *cultures* of medicine—I was bled copiously.

LYTTON *Pelham* III, iv.

## W

**Waacs.** [Brit.] The Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, who served behind the front lines in the World War, as waitresses, housekeepers, clerks, stenographers, etc., to the number of 20,000, and who wore a regular khaki uniform, and lived under strict military discipline.

**wad, wad of dough.** [U. S.] A roll of money; a bank-roll.

Even in those days I knew a thing or two about poker, and it would have required George Appo himself to have touched me for my *wad*. LILLARD *Poker Stories*, 102.

**wade into or through.** 1. To force one's way into or through some resisting substance as water, ice, or sand. 2. [U. S.] To attack violently, as with words or weapons, to lay out, to floor, to flummox, to pitch in.

She *waded through* the dirt to pluck him off me.

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act iv, sc. 1.

**wag.** A witty or talkative person; one whose tongue is never at rest; droll; in earlier use, a practical joker or buffoon.

And, with the Nymphs that haven't the silver streamers, Learne to entice the affable young *wagge*.

HEYWOOD *Fair Maid of the Exchange*.

—to *wag one's tongue*. To talk volubly.—to *wag a tail*. Of dogs, to show friendship or happiness.

He introduced himself with a *wag of his tail*, intimating a general willingness to be happy.

DR. J. BROWN *Spare Hours*, 1st ser., 87.

**wagedom.** The system under which wage-earners exist.

The employer of labour pockets the whole of the increment of value, leaving to the labourers only what they had to start with—viz., their own bodies, plus the cost of their maintenance during the process, and a small allowance for wear and tear. . . . Such is the modern system of *wagedom*.

Westminster Review CXXVI, 136.

**wage-earner or slave.** Any one who works for stated wages, 'slave' being the word preferred by Radicals.

Radical manufacturers and traders . . . have no more thought for the condition of the *wage earners* who produce this profit than a Southern planter had for the religious welfare of his gang of slaves.

Nineteenth Century XXVI, 136.

**wage, living or minimum.** A scale of pay, fixed in some states of the United States by official authority after investigation, as the lowest at which a worker can be self-supporting.

Although a self-supporting woman requires \$13 50 a week to live in Massachusetts, the *Minimum Wage* Commission of the State made an award fixing the minimum pay of experienced workers in the candy industry at \$12 a week.

Press Dispatch Boston, Oct. 10, 1921.

**wage, starvation.** Any wage below the minimum wage (q. v.).

**wages of sin.** The price paid for transgression as of the divine or moral law.

For the *wages of sin* is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans VI, 23.

**wage-worker.** A wage-earner (q. v.).

A civilisation which overtasks or underpays *wage-workers*, . . . this, truly, is not a civilisation for any conscientious thinking man to be proud of.

London *Lancet* l, 454 (1884)

**wait for dead men's shoes.** To look forward to some one's death in the hope of succeeding to property or position.

Cornelius, the eldest, who had made calculations of his own, and stuck to the hearth, *waiting for dead men's shoes*

READER *Cloister and the Hearth* 1

**wait on or upon.** 1. To go to see ; call upon.

The countess had actually come to *wait upon* Mrs Crawley on the failure of her second envoy

THACKERAY *Vanity Fair*

2. To attend and serve as a waiter or a valet. 3. To attend or follow as a result or consequence; accompany; as, may good fortune *wait upon* you.

**wake.** A vigil with a corpse: an ancient custom retained by the Irish. A term derived from the Anglo-Saxon *wæcan*, a watching.

A *wake*, sure it's an entertainment a man gives after he is dead, when his disconsolate friends all assemble at his house, to discuss his virtues and drink his poteen

GRACE GREENWOOD *Stories of Travel, Little Norah*

**wake up the wrong passenger.** [U. S.] To rouse one who might better have been left alone; to excite or encounter the wrong person: from the practise of arousing passengers on river boats or railroad trains, as when approaching their destination.

He had clearly found out that in making the attack he had *waked up the wrong passenger*

*The Evening Post* Chicago, April 21, 1871

**Walker, or Hookey Walker!** [Brit.] An exclamation used to indicate incredulity, variously interpreted as meaning "gammon," "humbug," "nonsense," "get out," etc.

*Hookey Walker*, an expression signifying that the story is not true or that the thing will not occur

LEWIS *Con Balatronicum*, 1811

"Go and buy it" (a prize turkey). "Walk-er!" exclaimed the boy "No, no," said Scrooge, "I am in earnest"

DICKENS *Christmas Carol*, V

—that beats the devil and Tom Walker. That surpasses everything

**walk into.** 1. To berate or scold soundly. 2. To attack voraciously; eat greedily.

There is little Jacob, *walking* . . . into a home-made plum cake, at a most surprising pace

DICKENS *Old Curiosity Shop* LXVIII

3. To beat or pitch into.

**walk one's chalks.** To go away; clear out; disappear.

**walkover.** An easy or unopposed success: a sporting term derived from horse-racing in which to qualify as winner in a race the horse entered must walk over the course.

**walk the hospitals.** [Brit. Medical Cant.] To attend hospitals and practise as a student by observing the methods of physicians and surgeons.

**walk the plank.** To walk up a plank placed across the gunwale of a ship until the plank by tilting overthrew the person (usually a prisoner) into the sea: a pirate's method of putting captives and others to death.

**walk through fire.** To pass through bitter suffering or a severe ordeal: in allusion to the medieval ordeal by fire, the survival through which established the innocence of accused persons.

**walking corpse, walking skeleton.** A listless, vigor-lacking emaciated person.

Looking like a moving and *walking corpse*, while yet an inhabitant of this world.

**walking delegate.** [U. S.] The business representative or agent of a labor union. SCOTT *Heart of Midlothian* II

**walking dictionary, encyclopedia, library.** A person who has a great store of knowledge at his command; a well-informed man or woman. HEAVEN deliver me from the proximity of a *walking dictionary* of technical terms!

**walking gentleman.** [Theater Cant.] An actor whose part requires a gentlemanlike appearance but with only a few lines to speak. Used also figuratively—**walking lady.** The female counterpart of the preceding. LYTTON *Gipsy* v.

The respectably-dressed and well-looking young fellows in comedies are called *walking gentlemen* and this is the probationary line of business usually assigned to young actors. COLBURN'S *New Monthly Magazine* XLIII, 360

George III tried unconstitutional monarchy, first by Lord Bute, a *walking gentleman*, and failed. SMITH *Three English Statesmen* 130

**walking papers or ticket.** A notice of discharge.—**to get or give one one's walking papers or ticket.** To be dismissed from one's employment.

The first course he took was to *give walking papers* to every man in office who dared (to oppose him). Colonial Crockett's *Tour* p. 80.

He added to the enormity of his conduct by *giving me my walking ticket*.

W G SIMMS *Border Beagles* p. 45.

**wall, like a stone.** [U. S.] Fixed; firm; immovable.

General Bee rallied his over-taxed troops, saying there is Jackson with his Virginians, standing *like a stone wall*. B P POORE *Reminiscences of Metropolis* II, 85

**wall, to be pushed or thrust to the.** To be pressed or driven to an extremity; be compelled to yield.—**to go to the wall.** To succumb to pressure; fail, prove unsuccessful.

He grows rich as the village grows poor, and so the Moslem *goes to the wall*.

St. James's Gazette 1887.

Women, being the weaker vessels, are ever *thrust to the wall*.

SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* act i, sc. 1

**wall, to hang by the.** To be in disuse; to hang up neglected.

SHAKESPEARE *Cymbeline* act iii, sc. 4

**wall, to lay by the.** To put out of the way; put aside, as a dead body laid by the wall awaiting burial.

**wall, to see far into a brick.** To have at least normal vision or penetration; to see through a millstone, etc.

**wall, to take the; to give or yield the wall.** To take or to surrender the advantage: in allusion to the period when gutters ran in the middle of the street, and the better path was that near the houses and was by common practice yielded to persons of quality by the plainer folks.

**wall, with one's back to the.** See under BACK.

**walla or wallah.** [Anglo-Ind.] A merchant or vender; an agent; also, a servant, laborer, worker; hence, a fellow or person. Used in many combinations, as **competition walla**, an employee who has passed a civil service examination; also, the examination itself.—**punka walla.** A servant who keeps fans (*punkas*) in motion.

**wallaby.** [Austral.] 1. A small variety of kangaroo, known for its timidity and speed in flight. 2. By extension, an Australian halfbreed.

—on the wallaby, on the wallaby track. Out of work; in search of a job.

"What does your lordship suppose a *wallaby* to be?" "Why a half caste, of course" *Contemporary Review*, LIII, 3

A certain colonial Governor exhibited immoral tendencies by living on an island in the midst of a number of favourite *wallabies*, whom he was known frequently to caress  
GARNET WALSH *Victoria in 1880*

**wall-flower.** A woman who at a ball keeps her seat or stands against the wall, presumably for lack of a partner.

**walls have ears.** There is no privacy or secrecy within doors.

"The Ear of Dionysius" enabled him to hear all that went on in his prison, the walls of the Louvre were honeycombed with tubes called "auriculaires" through which Catherine de Medici was able to overhear all State secrets and plots

**wammikan.** [Amerind.] A raft of square timber on which a wooden hut or shanty is erected for the sleeping and cooking accommodation of Maine lumbermen.

**wampun.** [U. S.] Shell-beads used as currency by the North American Indians among themselves and during the colonial period between Europeans: from the New England Algonquian, *wampumpeage*, from *wamp*, white, and *umpe*, a string (of shell beads).

A *Wompum* is a small cylinder of about one-third of an inch long. A number of these strung upon small threads and knit together in the form of a belt are called a Belt of *Wompum*  
HOPKINS *Hist. Mem. of Housatunnuk Indians* 18

**wangle.** [Gt. Brit.] I. *n* 1. A deception, swindle, or trick; also, the act of deceiving, swindling, or tricking.

In the army the Victoria Cross is the only decoration which is admittedly above suspicion of a *wangle*  
*The Evening Standard* London, Jan 1, 1920

2. [Scot.] A swaying from side to side; wabble; wiggle. II. *v* 1.

[Gt. Brit.] To obtain by trickery or deception; swindle, fake; also, to cover up or conceal, as defects, fraud, etc., deceptively; as, to *wangle* a decoration; *wangle* a time slip or accounts. 2. To obtain something for nothing. 3. [Scot.] To wabble or sway; oscillate; waggle; swing from side to side; dodge; as to *wangle* a ship through a field of floating mines.

**wanigan.** 1. A shanty or hut used as a place for the storage of supplies in a logging camp; also, a chest for lumbermen's clothing, shoes, tobacco, etc. 2. A shack occupied by the accountant in a lumber camp — *running the wanigan*. Taking a boat loaded with supplies down a river from station to station

**wanion.** Back luck or disaster: used in the phrases in a *wanion*, *wanions on you*, or with a *wanion to you*, as imprecations of bad luck.

Come away, or Ile fetch th' with a *wanion*. SHAKESPEARE *Pericles* act ii, sc 1

**wanting.** Deficient in intellect; mentally lacking.—to be found *wanting*. To be proved deficient or lacking. *Daniel* v, 27.

**want of consideration.** Indifference: carelessness respecting the feelings or wishes of another.

**want to know, I.** [U. S.] An exclamation of interest, surprize or assent, not a request for information.

"I *want to know!*" exclaimed the other down-easter "Well, you do know," replied the southerner, mistaking the northern exclamation for a formal interrogatory.

JOHN NEAL *The Down-Easters* I, 45.

When a person has communicated some intelligence in which the hearer feels an interest he manifests it by saying "I *want to know*"; and when he has concluded his narrative, the hearer will reply, "O! do tell!" BUCKINGHAM *Eastern and Western States* I, 177.



**war** is used in many figurative and idiomatic phrases; as, **honors of war**, marks of respect or concessions granted to a capitulating force, or the funeral honors paid by a body of soldiers to one of their deceased comrades at a military funeral—**holy war**. A contest based upon religious motives, as the Crusades, or a united effort, as of Moslems against enemies of some other faith.—**war-horse**. A veteran in war or politics, hence, one tried by long experience—**war-paint**. Full dress and personal adornment; as, a chaperon in her *war-paint*—**to be or go on the war-path**. To be aroused to anger; be ready for a fight—**war to the knife**. Mortal conflict; relentless opposition.—**war-whoop**. A howl or yell made by American Indians as a signal for or in advancing to attack.

**ward in chancery or ward of court**. A minor or lunatic under the protection of a court of equity.

**warden of the Cinque Ports**. [Eng.] The governor of the five southern English seaports, Dover, Hastings, Hythe, Romney, and Sandwich.—**warden of the marches**. [Eng.] An officer whose duty was to protect the frontiers of the kingdom especially the marches or borders adjacent to Scotland and Wales.—**warden of the standards**. [Eng.] The official custodian of the imperial standards of measure and weight.

**ward-room**. [Naval.] The common room of the commissioned officers on a warship; hence, the officers collectively.

**warm**. [U. S. Slang.] Characterized by heat, as of passion, love, etc.; hence, indelicate; coarse.—**warm baby**. A restive tomboy or frolicsome young woman—**warm friend**. An intimate friend—**warm language**. Vehement, passionate or angry words—**warm member**. One who manifests ardor or displays energy to his own advantage, an ardent mirer—**warm partizan**. An enthusiastic supporter—**warm reception**. A cordial reception: often used ironically—**warm welcome**. A hearty welcome—**warm work**. Dangerous or quick work.

**warming-pan**. A temporary incumbent of an office, placed there to hold it till the intended occupant is ready to take it.

**wash dirty or soiled linen in public**. To discuss personal matters of a scandalous or unpleasant nature before strangers.

It is ridiculous that grave disputes . . . should be kept waiting while the *dirty linen* of high society is *washed in public*. *The Law Times* vol 91, p. 21

**washed out, to be**. To be completely exhausted, or wearied to the point of pallor; lack energy or be pale or bloodless.

**washed sales**. [Financial Cant.] Fictitious sales of stocks or bonds, or commodities, arranged by brokers of one interest to make it appear that there is much trading in the stock or bonds or commodities *washed*, in order to make a show of activity or to create a market price.

*Washed* or fictitious sales are positively forbidden, and will render the parties concerned liable to suspension or expulsion from the Produce Exchange.

*Annual Report New York Produce Exchange, 1888-9.*

**washing, to give one's head for the**. To swallow an insult.

So am I, and forty more good fellows, that will not give their heads for the *washing*, I take it. BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER *Cupid's Revenge* act iv, sc. 3.

**wash one's hands of**. To take no further responsibility in; dismiss from consideration; to free oneself from; decline to have anything more to do with.

You are incurrible. *I wash my hands of you*. EDNA LYALL *Knight-Errant* (1889) 29

**wasplish, waspy**. 1. Irascible, snappish; resentful.

What sting this *wasplish* fortune pricks me with RANDOLPH *Amyntas* II, 2.

2. Having a slender or wasp-like waist: said of women.

She had none of your Chinese feet, nor *waspy* unhealthy waists, which those may admire who will. THACKERAY *Fitz-Boodle's Confessions*, Dorothea

**wasps'-nest.** A swarm of troubles or harassing annoyances; hence, adverse criticism or hostility from a number of persons as if one had disturbed a wasps' nest.

It was into a *wasps' nest* that the imprudent Louise thrust herself

*Illustrated London News* 1887

**wassail!** 1. Health to you! a salutation of good will or toast in festivities as at Yuletide. 2. Hence, an occasion of festivity. 3. The liquor—wine and ale mixed with sugar and spices—prepared for the festivity. From the Anglo-Saxon *wes*, imper. of *wesan*, be, and *hal*, whole.

**waste, to run to.** To become exhausted, spoiled or useless for any purpose.

Alas! our young affections *run to waste*,

Or water but the desert

BYRON *Childe Harold* IV. 120

**watch.** [Naut.] The four-hour period in which a certain part of a ship's crew is on duty. **Dog watches** are two-hour watches, from four to eight p. m., introduced to throw night shift duty from one watch to another. **Starboard or larboard watch**, also called the **captain's watch**, is one of the two divisions of a ship's officers and crew commanded by the captain or second mate, and the **port watch** is commanded by the first mate

**watch, on the.** On the alert; vigilant, on guard against surprise or attack.

**watch-dog.** One who is entrusted with the safe-keeping of property; especially, a dog specially trained to guard premises or property.—

**watch-dog of the treasury.** [U. S. Pol.] A congressman who opposes large appropriations.

**watchword.** 1. A password, slogan, maxim, or rallying cry.

His *watchword* is honour, his *pay* is renown

SCOTT *Rokeby* V. 20

2. A signal or warning to be on one's guard.—**to set a watchword upon.** To make a byword of

**watch your step.** [U. S.] Mind what you are about; look where you are going; be careful of your manner: a phrase derived from the warning given to passengers on entering or quitting public conveyances, railroad cars, etc.

**water, above.** Out of danger or difficulties; secure; free, as from liabilities; as, he contributed to the fund as soon as he got *above water*.

**water-color.** A painting done in colors that are so prepared as to be used with water.

**water-haul.** A fruitless effort; a failure: in allusion to a haul by fishermen of a net in which no fish are caught.

**water in a sieve, to draw.** To waste energy in an absurd action.

**water mark, high or low.** The mark of high or low tide; both frequently employed in figurative senses.

I'm at *low water-mark* myself—only one bob and a magpie; but as far as it goes, I'll fork out and stump

DICKENS *Oliver Twist*.

**water, of the first.** Free from blemish, color, flow, and perfect in brilliancy: said of a diamond often used attributively.

**water-rat.** A waterside thief; also, a small boy of amphibious habits.

**water runs to his mill, all.** Everything comes his way: said of a person favored by fortune.

**water, to back.** To recede from a position held; withdraw an opinion expressed.

**water, to take.** [U. S.] See under TAKE.

**waters, in deep.** In distress, trouble, tribulation.

Let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of *deep waters*.

*Psalm* LXIX, 14.

**waters, to cast one's bread upon the.** To give freely; help unstintedly; in allusion to *Ecclesiastes* xi, 1.—"*Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.*"

**waters, to cast or pour oil on troubled.** To still, soothe, allay or placate: in allusion to the use of oil in reducing waves at sea.

**water stock.** 1. [Financial Cant.] To increase the number of shares of the capital stock of a corporation which has made a good showing in dividends, without adding to the capital.

The stock of some of the railways has been *watered* to an enormous extent by the issue of fictitious capital, existing only on paper, though ranking equally for dividend, when money for this is forthcoming. Usually the paper stock has been sold to many customers.

*Fortnightly Review* XLIII, 837

2. [Colloq.] To drive cattle to a drinking-place.

**water-wagon.** A wagon used in carrying water, as for sprinkling streets.

—**to be on the water-wagon.** [U. S.] To abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages —**to fall from the water-wagon.** To resume the drinking of alcoholic beverages

**wattle and dab or daub.** Wicker work daubed with mud and mortar: used by settlers in Australia. See quotation.

The hut of the labourer was usually formed of platted twigs or young branches plastered over with mud, and known by the summary definition of *wattle and dab*.

W. WESTGARTH *Australia Felix* 201

**wave, permanent.** [U. S.] A treatment of the human hair to secure a wavy or curling effect.

**wax.** I. *n.* Anger; fury. II. *v.* To grow; increase in size; assume by degrees a specified state or condition; as, to *wax* angry; to *wax* old.

**wax, as close as.** Miserly; as close as the bark on a tree: said of a niggardly person.

Not much chance of drawing Sim Sharples when he is alone. He's *as close as wax*, and so's Sam Rogers.

GOULD *Landed at Last* V

**wax fat and kick.** To become unruly and difficult to manage because of too much wealth.

But Jeshurun *waxed fat and kicked*.

*Deuteronomy* XXXII, 15.

**wax, in a.** In a rage; in a temper.

She's in a terrible *wax*, but she'll be all right by the time he comes back from his holidays.

H. KINGSLEY *Ravenshoe* V.

**way** is used in a number idiomatic phrases with varying significance.

—**back way.** A roundabout or indirect way.—**by the way.** Incidentally—by way of. 1. On the point of. 2. With the object or purpose of; to serve as. 3. Through, via —**Great White Way.** Broadway, New York: so called from its garish illumination at night

—**in a fair way of.** On the right track—fair way being the right track through a channel; likely to —**in a good or bad way.** Prosperous, or the reverse; favored or frowned upon by fortune —**in a way.** 1. In one sense; in a particular manner.

Had, *in a way* not to be pardoned, drawn his pen against a certain great man then alive.

SWIFT *Tale of a Tub*.

2. Disturbed; concerned about; worried.—**in the way.** 1. In a position to obstruct or impede; situated so as to hinder. 2. Along one's route or way; on or convenient to the way; hence, close at hand. 3. Not welcome; as, the visitor soon realized that he *was in the way*.

It may seem strange that I felt *in the way* in their company. *Mistletoe Bough*, 1885.

**—in the way of.** 1. In a position to do or get, likely to meet with **—in the way with one.** Accompanying one, as in travels **—on the way.** In progress, going, journeying; nearing achievement or completion

My lord, I over-rode him *on the way*

SHAKESPEARE *II Henry IV* act 1, sc 1

**—out of the way.** 1. Removed, as an obstruction 2. Not easily reached; inaccessible. 3. Out of the proper course; hence, unusual; improper 4. Not in place; hence, lost; mislaid

Is't lost, is't gone? Speak, is it *out o' the way?*

SHAKESPEARE *Othello* act III, sc. 4

**—the way.** Christ as *the way* of salvation See *John* xiv, 6 **—to come one's way.** To arrive within reach of one, as fortune, as, things are *coming my way*, i.e., my plans are developing to my advantage **—to go a great or a little way.** To have a great or small influence upon **—to go the way of all flesh, all the earth, of nature.** To die.

Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die, and he charged his son Solomon, saying, *I go the way of all the earth*, be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man.

*I Kings* II, 1-2

**—to make one's way.** To become prosperous, achieve success, rise in the world

**—under way.** In progress a phrase of the sea signifying progress through water; hence, a vessel *under way* is one that has begun a voyage **—ways and means.** Resources: methods or money to defray expenses **—way station.** [U. S.] A railway station at which express trains ordinarily do not stop, hence, **way passenger** or **freight**, a passenger or consignment of goods for a way station

**way of being, doing, etc., by.** [Brit.] In the state or condition of being, doing, etc.

Phipps was *by way of being* something of a musician

*Good Words* 1887.

**weak as a cat.** Very feeble: used only of physical weakness.

"Let's go up and see It is no good stopping here, we must get food somewhere

I feel as *weak as a cat*"

H. R. HAGGARD

**weak as water.** Very feeble: used of persons in regard to physical and moral characteristics.

**weaker sex or vessel.** Woman.

Giving honor unto the woman, as unto the *weaker vessel*

*I Peter* III, 7

I must comfort the *weaker vessel*, as doublet and hose ought to show itself courageous to petticoat

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act II, sc 4

**weak side.** That phase of one's character or disposition easily influenced or wrought upon.

Guard thy heart *On this weak side*, where most our nature fails

ADDISON *Cato* act 1, sc 1.

**Weald, the.** A tract of wooded undulating land beginning in Surrey and extending through Kent and Sussex along the south coast of England from Dover to Beachy Head.

The *Weald* of Surrey . is a clay-bottomed, wet, unpleasant passage of country

MARSHAL *Review* (1817), v, 355

**wear and tear.** Loss by service, exposure, decay, or injury: often used figuratively.

**wear the willow.** To put on mourning for a lost love.

Tell him, in hope he'll prove a widower shortly,

I'll *wear the willow* garland for his sake.

SHAKESPEARE *III Henry VI* act III, sc. 3

**wear on.** To pass slowly by: used of time.

**weasel words.** Words or promises that sound well but mean nothing.

One of our defects as a nation is the tendency to use what have been called *weasel words*. When a weasel sucks eggs the meat is sucked out of the egg If you use a "*weasel word*" after another there is nothing left of the other

THEODORE ROOSEVELT Speech delivered at St. Louis, May 31, 1916.

**weathercock.** A fickle, vacillating, inconstant person, whose affections shift with every wind.

They are Men whose Conditions are subject to more Revolutions than a *Weathercock*, or the Uncertain Mind of a Fantastical Woman. WARD *London Spy*

**weather-eye.** [Orig. Nautical.] Observation of the weather: chiefly in the phrase to **keep one's weather-eye open or awake.** To keep one's wits about one; be alert and cautious.

Keep your weather-eye awake, and don't make any more acquaintances, however handsome DICKENS *Our Mutual Friend* II, 5.

**weather, the clerk of.** An imaginary person in control of weather conditions: often humorously used of the U. S. Weather Bureau, or its employees or chief.

**weather, under the.** See UNDER THE WEATHER.

**wed.** To pledge; to take as a husband or wife. Used in many phrases as, **wed over the mixen.** [Prov. Brit.] To marry a neighbor.—**wed over the moor.** [Prov. Brit.] To marry some one from a distance.—**better wed over the mixen than over the moor.** It is better to marry one from among one's neighbors than a stranger from distant parts.—**wed with a rush ring.** [Brit.] To marry without serious consideration, to go through a mock ceremony.

**wedding.** Originally, a betrothal; now, the ceremony of marriage or its anniversary or the celebration of such anniversary. The anniversaries are commonly designated as follows: *First:* Cotton. *Second:* Paper. *Third:* Leather. *Fifth:* Wooden. *Seventh:* Woolen. *Tenth:* Tin. *Twelfth:* Silk and linen. *Fifteenth:* Crystal. *Twentieth:* China. *Twenty-fifth:* Silver. *Thirtieth:* Pearl. *Fortieth:* Ruby. *Fiftieth:* Golden. *Seventy-fifth:* Diamond.—**knobstick-wedding.** A compulsory marriage.—**wedding lines.** A marriage certificate.—**wedding-ribbon.** A ribbon given by a bride to be raced for as one of the events of her wedding festivity.

**wedge, to drive in the small (or thin) end of the.** To begin in a slight or an insignificant way a movement designed or likely to have important consequences.

**weep millstones, to.** Not to weep at all.

**weeping cross, to come home, or return, by.** To undergo some sorrowful experience, or regret some failure or course of conduct; repent; grieve. From the crosses by the wayside where formerly penitents made their devotions.

Few men have wedded . . . their paramours but have come home by *Weeping Cross* FLORIO *Montaigne's Essays*.

Of the three places now retaining the name *Weeping Cross* one is between Oxford and Banbury; another very near [2 miles S.E.] Stafford, where the road turns off to Walsall; the third near Shrewsbury. NARES *Glossary*.

**weeping-ripe.** Ready to weep.

The king was weeping-ripe for a good word.

SHAKESPEARE *Love's Labour's Lost* act v, sc. 2.

**Weird Sisters, the three.** The Fates.

I dreamt last night of the *three weird sisters* SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* act ii, sc. 1.

**well** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases of varied significance, as the following:—**as well.** Equally.—**as well as.** Just as much; in addition to.—**to speak well for.** To create a favorable impression for; be commendatory of.—**well and good.** Satisfactory; acceptable.

If it come up a prize, *well and good*; and if it come up a blank, why, *well and good* too. MARIA EDGEWORTH.

—**well-groomed, well-shod.** Well-dressed, scrubbed, brushed; well-shoed: terms

of the stable applied to both men and women—**well in**. [Austral.] In comfortable financial circumstances; **well-to-do**.—**well seen**. Accomplished well-approved

As a schoolmaster

*Well seen* in music, to instruct Bianca.

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act 1, sc. 2.

—**well-to-do**. In prosperous circumstances; comparatively rich; comfortably off

Moreover, she had a distillery of rum and arrack in Kingston itself, and everybody agreed that she must be very *well-to-do* in the world. G. A. SALA

**Welsh**. [Sporting.] To cheat; especially to default in payment of wagers made at a race-track.—**welsher**. A fraudulent book-maker; cheat.

**Welsh cricket**. A body-louse; cootie.

**Welsh parsley**. Hemp from which halters were made.

**Welsh rabbit**. Cheese toasted or melted, generally seasoned, and served on toast.

The phrase appears to be of slang origin, much as *panhas*, *pan-rabbit*, means scrap-ple or mush, and *Munster plums* means potatoes. The form *rarebit*, given by Grose and Webster is erroneous Compare GLASGOW MAGISTRATE, MUNSTER PLUM

**welt**. To beat so severely as to raise a welt.—**welter**. A stinging blow.—**welting**. A thorough beating or sound thrashing

He gave us eight cuts apiece—*welters*—for takin' unheard-of liberties with a new master. KIPLING *Stalky & Co.* 49.

**West Pointer**. [U. S.] A cadet or graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, as distinguished from an officer raised from the National Guard or from the ranks of the regulars.

**Westralia**. West Australia: a telescope word coming within the ten letters permitted as a cable word, and adopted for West Australian mining stocks.

*Westralians* continue decidedly firm, notwithstanding the troubles of the markets and the slackness of business *The Pall Mall Gazette*, London May 15, 1901

**wet**. [U. S.] I. *a*. Favoring the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages; opposed to prohibition. II. *n*. One who favors licensing the sale of intoxicants.

**wet-bird**. [Gt. Brit.] The chaffinch: because its cry is supposed to foretell rain.

**wet-blanket**. See under BLANKET.

**whack**. 1. A blow; thwack. 2. A share or portion. 3. A turn or spell, as of work; an effort. The word is used idiomatically in the following phrases—out of **whack**. Out of order—to take one's **whack**. To drink wine or other alcoholic beverages.—to **whack away**. To strike heavily or continuously; hence, to persevere; keep at steadily—to **whack it up**. [Brit.] To drink heavily; be a hard drinker.—to **whack up**. 1. To share or divide 2. To pay up.

**whale, it's very like a**. Ironical agreement to an absurd statement, in allusion to the colloquy between Hamlet and Polonius. See *Hamlet* act iii, sc. 2.

**whangdoodle**. [U. S.] 1. A mythical nondescript creature met, sometimes in books, and perhaps allied to the gyascutus.

Where the lion roareth and the *whangdoodle* mourneth for her first born.

Burlesque Sermons in COLE'S *Fun Doctor*.

2. In poker, a round of jack-pots.

**what d'ye call it or him.** An expression showing ignorance or forgetfulness of or contempt for the person or thing referred to.

"I might feel it was a great blow," said Miss Snevellicci, "to break up old associations and *what-do-you-call-'ems* of that kind, but I would submit, my dear, I would indeed."

DICKENS *Nicholas Nickleby*.

Good even, good Master *What-you-call 't*: how do you, sir!

SHAKESPEARE *As You Like It* act iii, sc. 3.

**what for no?** [Scot.] Why not?

**what for, to give one.** [Brit.] To rebuke, reprimand, or punish, for some fault or neglect.

**what not.** What need not be added or mentioned; an elliptical use, commonly equivalent to "etc."

**what's his or its name.** Phrases used in the sense of **WHAT D'YE CALL IT**.

**what's what.** The real or genuine thing; as, he knows *what's what*.

**what, who, when, where or how the devil or the dickens.** An expletive of astonishment or annoyance.

*What the devil is all this about?*

R B PEAKE *Comfortable Lodgings*, I, 3

**wheel-horse.** [U. S.] A vigorous political party leader or campaign manager: in allusion to the horse driven in the shafts or next to the wheels on which the greater labor devolves.

Whenever offices are to be filled, we desire such men as he, and not old political hacks and wheel-horses, should fill them

The Nation XIII, 267

**wheel, to break a butterfly on the.** To punish out of all proportion to an offense.

Satire, or sense, alas, can Sporus feel

Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel!

POPE *Prolog to Satires*.

**wheel, to put a spoke in one's.** To interfere with, or stop one's progress; to do an ill turn to some one: in allusion to the spoke or pin by which a wheel is locked.

**wheels in the head, to have.** To be mentally unbalanced.

**wheels, to go on.** To make satisfactory progress; go smoothly or easily, to run quickly.

**wheels, to grease the.** To provide the money to carry on an enterprise.

**wheels within wheels.** More than is to be seen at first sight; complications or intricacies that are not to be outwardly apparent.—a

*wheel within a wheel.* An act prompted by hope or desire of a like in return; as there's a *wheel within a wheel* or you would not have received that—that which you have received was given you because the giver has some favor to ask in return

**when in Rome do as the Romans do.** Conform to the habits and manners of the people among whom you live: said to be based on St. Augustine's compliance with the Roman custom of fasting on Saturday, altho it was new to him.

And you at Rome must do as the Romans do,

According to the proverb.

BYRON *Beppo* IX.

**Whig.** 1. A member of the Liberal party in England in the 18th and 19th centuries, as opposed to a Tory or Conservative. 2. In earlier usage: (a) A Presbyterian rebel of the west of Scotland in the 17th century: thus named in derision. (b) After the Restoration (1660), a Roundhead or Parliamentarian, as opposed to a Cavalier.

*Whig* is a shortened form of *whiggamor*, from *whiggam*, a term used by Scottish teamsters who came from the west of Scotland to Leith to buy corn in summer.

See SEAR'S *Etymological Dictionary*, 4th edition, p. 711.

(1) In the 18th century, an American colonist who supported the Revolutionary war: opposed to *Tory*. (2) A member of the party that succeeded the National Republicans and opposed the Democrats. It favored internal improvements, a protective tariff, and a strong national or central government. The *Whig* party was succeeded by the Republican party in 1856. FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary*

**while away the time.** To cause to pass pleasantly; spend or beguile the time; amuse oneself.

**whip.** [Gt. Brit.] I. *n.* A member of parliament who supervises the discipline and business affairs of his party, and unofficially drums up attendance in case of divisions, etc. There is no corresponding post in the United States. II. *v.* 1. To defeat; overcome; surpass; coerce. 2. To bring together for united action; summon and convene; govern by party influence and discipline, as the members of a political party.

The only bond of cohesion is the caucus, which occasionally whips a party together for cooperative action. WOODROW WILSON *Congressional Government*.

**whip-hand.** A commanding position; the advantage; the best of a matter in controversy.

A scheme to get the *whip-hand* over them. *The Field* London, Dec 24, 1887

**whip one's weight in wild cats.** [U. S.] A mild expression of Democratic inequality formerly common in the west.

That confidence of a western man which induces him to believe that he can *whip his weight in wild cats*, is no vain boast. *A Week in Wall Street*, 46

**whippersnapper.** A noisily pretentious but insignificant person; a whipster or shallow nimble fellow.

**whip-row of, to have the.** [U. S.] To have the mastery of or advantage over.

**whipsaw.** [U. S.] To cut both ways, like a whipsaw; hence, to destroy by a backward and forward movement.

The blackguards showed no mercy. They did not let him win even a few dollars to encourage him, but either booked the cards every trip, or else whipsawed him until he was forced to drop. LILLARD *Poker Stories* CXIX

**whistle** as a noun or a verb occurs with special significance in the following idioms:—**clean, neat or slick as a whistle.** Very clean, neat or slick. —**to be at one's whistle.** To be at one's beck and call —**to go whistling jigs to a milestone.** To waste efforts on useless undertakings

During the Parliamentary Session of 1898 an Irish member was called to order by the Speaker for saying, "We might as well go whistling jigs to a milestone as appeal for justice to the right honorable gentlemen on the Treasury Bench"

MACDONAGH *Life and Character* 333

—**to pay (dearly or too high) for one's whistle.** To pay too much: in allusion to Dr Franklin's story of his nephew, who bought a whistle at four times its value

I wouldn't destroy any old bits, but that notion of reproducing the old is a mistake, I think, at least, if a man likes to do it, he must pay for his whistle

GEORGE ELIOT *Daniel Deronda* XXXV.

—**to wet one's whistle.** To take a drink —**to whistle down the wind.** To talk foolishly or to no purpose.—**to whistle for.** To ask or seek with small chance of receiving or finding

If Measter Cholmley don't do what I ax him, he may go whistle for my vote, he may GASKELL *Sylvia's Lovers* IV.

—**to whistle for a breeze.** [Naut.] To call up the wind during a calm by whistling: from an old superstition.

**whit, not a.** Not in the least; not in the slightest degree.

I perceive you delight not in musique In *Not a whit*

SHAKESPEARE *Two Gentlemen of Verona* act iv, sc. 2.

**white.** [U. S.] Straightforward; honest; upright in all dealings.



**white as a sheet.** Pale: applied usually to the pallor which comes of sudden emotion or long illness.

**White Caps.** 1. [U. S.] Extra legal organizations pretending to enforce public order, but sporadic rather than inter-state. Compare with NIGHT-RIDERS, KU KLUX KLAN, VIGILANTES. 2. [w-c-] Waves crested with white. In less current phrase, **white horses**.

**white collar slaves.** [U. S.] The great clerical class of employees, who can not go to work in overalls, and frequently wear cuffs as well as collars: used by Socialists as a term of reproach.

**white elephant on his hands, to have or to keep a.** To support a highly expensive dignity, honor, or fad. See WHITE ELEPHANT under ELEPHANT.

**white heat.** In an intense passion; very excited or angry: in allusion to the temperature of a metal heated until it glows white.

They let their thinking be done for them, in all critical moments, by Parisian journalists at a *white heat* Contemporary Review, 1887

**White House.** [U. S.] The popular name of the official residence of the President of the United States, in Washington, D. C., legally styled the Executive Mansion.

**White League.** [U. S. Pol.] A semi-military organization of white men in Louisiana in 1874 during the Reconstruction Period, having for its object the suppression of negro ascendancy in politics in the Southern States.

**white lie.** See under LIE.

**white livered.** Cowardly: from the once accepted belief that the liver was the seat of the violent passions, including anger and love.

In every market place papers about the brazen forehead . . . and *white liver* of Jack Howe, the French King's buffoon, flew about

MACAULAY *History of England* XXV.

**white man's burden.** Responsibility for the moral and physical welfare of all the earth's brunette races, according to British and American imperialists, as voiced by Kipling's poem of which the phrase is the title.

**white trash.** [U. S.] Poor white folks. See under POOR.

**whited sepulcher.** A hypocrite; any one who appears outwardly righteous, but within is full of iniquity. Derived from *Matthew* XXIII, 27.

**whitewash.** 1. To attempt the restoration of a badly damaged reputation; to conceal wrong-doing or corruption;

*Whitewash'd*, he quits the politicians strife,  
At ease in mind, with pockets filled for life.

LOWELL *Tempora Mutantur*.

2. [Financial.] To clear a bankrupt person of debt by legal process.

3. [Sports.] To defeat without permitting the opposing side to score.

**whole, on or upon the.** Everything being considered; upon a complete review of the circumstances; all the circumstances being weighed.

The death of Elizabeth, though on the *whole* it improved Bacon's prospects, was in one respect an unfortunate event for him MACAULAY *Essays*, Bacon.

**whopper, whopping.** Something large, fine, good, or grossly exaggerated, as a lie.

**why and wherefore, the.** The reason, cause, and explanation.

**wicked one, the.** The devil; Satan.

**wide-awake.** I. *a.* Shrewd, keen, sharp, alert. II. *n.* [Brit.] A round felt hat with rolled brim.

Our governor's *wide awake*, he is, I'll never say nothin' agin him nor no man, but he knows what's o'clock, he does, uncommon. DICKENS *Sketches*

**wide swath, to cut a.** To make a display; show off; to attempt a great deal.

**widow, the.** [U. S.] In poker, a small amount deducted from each jackpot to pay for refreshments, etc.—**to feed the widow.** To draw out the widow's portion

**wigging, to get a.** To be rebuked or scolded.

If the head of a firm calls a clerk into the parlour and rebukes him, it is an *ear-wigging*, if it is done before the other clerks it is a *wigging* HOTTEN *Slang Dictionary*

**wiggle and wobble.** A Republican slogan in the Presidential campaign of 1920 in derision of the alleged vacillation of their opponents on important issues.

"Let's be done with *wiggle and wobble*" Advertisement of the Republicans National Committee *The Literary Digest* Oct. 23, 1920

**wigwam.** [Amerind.] The dwelling of the American Indian, a tent of skins supported on poles arranged like the ribs of umbrellas. In United States politics Tammany Hall is often referred to as the *Wigwam*.

**wildcat.** [U. S.] Carried on recklessly or wildly; hence, irresponsible, unstable; unreliable; unsafe: used especially of business schemes.—**wildcat bank.** A State or private bank that issued quantities of unsecured paper before the National Bank Act of 1863—**wildcat currency.** The depreciated currency so issued

**wild-goose chase.** A foolish undertaking or bootless enterprise.

**will he, nill he, or willy nilly.** Whether he wishes or not; willing or unwilling; vacillating, shilly-shallying.

**will, one's own sweet.** One's unrestrained wishes or uncontrolled desires: often used ironically.

If only the idealists can have their way, and work out the yearnings of *their own sweet will*, we shall soon be a teetotal, vegetarian, and non-tobacco-smoking people *Family Herald* (quoted in *Edinburgh Review*, 1887)

**will-o'-the-wisp.** The ignis fatuus; hence, anything that deceives; an illusion.

**willow.** [Brit. Sporting.] A bat used in the game of cricket.

**wilt.** 1. To weaken or give up as in an argument; yield a position. 2. To become limp, as a collar, when moistened by perspiration. 3. [Brit.] To run away. 4. To wither; droop; fade.

Then softly he whispered, How could you do so!  
I certainly thought I was jilted;  
But come thou to me, to the parson we'll go;  
Say, wilt thou, my dear and she *wilted*.

*The Spirit of the Times*, New York, 1854

**win by a nose, or a head.** [Sporting.] To win by the narrowest of margins: in allusion to horse-racing.

**win the day.** To be victorious or successful.

I say again, if Lewis do *win the day*,  
He is forsworn.

SHAKESPEARE *King John* act v, sc. 4.

**wind-bag.** A boastful, garrulous person; a bragger.

**wind blows, watch how the.** To await developments; be on the lookout for something to happen.

**wind, in the.** Impending; imminent, as something that seems about to happen, as if scented in the wind.

"What's in the wind, I wonder" muttered Titmouse.

SAMUEL WARREN *Ten Thousand a Year*.

**windjammer.** 1. A sailing ship or a member of its crew. 2. A bugler or trumpeter. 3. A blowhard. 4. A wordy talker; windbag; soap-box orator or budding professional politician.

**winds, to go or be cast to the.** To be lost or dissipated; to be scattered beyond recovery.

**wind to the shorn lamb, God tempers the.** The Almighty softens the affliction of a sufferer or lightens the burden of the afflicted.

An aphorism derived from the French "Dieu mesure le froid à la brébis tondue."

HENRI ESTIENNE *Prémices* p 47 (1894).

**wind up** 1. To stimulate for action or a course of conduct; put in a state for activity. 2. To excite by degrees; make tense with expectancy or eagerness. 3. To bring to a conclusion or settlement; especially, in business, to go into liquidation. 4. Hence, to stop talking; shut up.

**Windy City, the.** [U. S.] Chicago: from its location as exposed to the winds.

Denver was then but a village, but now it almost rivals the *Windy City*

MRS. MACKIN *Two Continents* 30.

**wing, to take.** To quit suddenly; to leave without warning.

**wing, to take under one's.** 1. To protect. 2. To act as patron of.

I've got to take under my wing, tra la la,

A most disagreeable thing

GILBERT *Mikado, Flowers of Spring*

**wings of Azrael, to hear the rustling of the.** To realize the approach of death, Azrael or Izrael, in Jewish and Moslem belief, being the angel of death.

**wink at or on.** 1. To shut one eye as a signal, hint, or suggestion.

I will wink on her to consent, my lord, if you will teach her to know my meaning.

SHAKESPEARE *Henry V*, act v, sc 2.

2. To close the eyes under pretense of not seeing; to ignore.

*Wink at the Duke of Suffolk's insolence* At Beaufort's pride

SHAKESPEARE *II Henry VI* act ii, sc. 2.

**winking, like.** [Brit.] Very quickly; almost instantaneously.

Nod away at him, if you please, *like winking*

DICKENS *Great Expectations* XXV.

**wipe down.** To subject to adulation; praise extravagantly; flatter.

**wipe out.** [U. S.] To destroy utterly; exterminate; annihilate.

We are coming to Lawrence in a few days, said the Missourians, to *wipe out the*

. . . abolition city, and to . . . drive off, every one of the inhabitants

ROBINSON *Kansas* 222.

**wire.** I. *v.* [Brit. & U. S.] To send a telegram or a cable message. II. *n.*

1. A message sent by telegraph or electric cable. 2. [Brit. Police Cant.]

An expert pickpocket.

**wire in or away.** [Brit.] To apply oneself industriously, zealously, to set to with a will.

She's a fine girl, and I think Mr. Lupus won't object to my hanging my hat up there.

I'll *wire in* and convert her first, though.

NIBBET *Sheep's Clothing* 132.

**wire-tapper.** One who makes a telephone- or telegraph-connection, often illicitly, by tapping a wire, as to secure private information.

**wire-tapping.** The act of a wire-tapper.

**wish one joy of.** To hope one may get satisfaction out of some condition or thing while entertaining doubt of ability to do so: frequently used in an ironical sense, which precisely reverses its meaning.

**wish to goodness.** To desire earnestly.

"Lying all the time horribly sick in your berth, and *wishing to goodness* you were back again in the schoolroom"

*Murray's Magazine*, 1887.

**witch is in it, the.** It is under the influence of a supernatural power.

In her simple way she recognized something like that mythic power when she rose from her struggle with the problem, and said aloud to herself, "*Well, the witch is in it*"

W. D. HOWELLS.

**with a will.** Heartily; earnestly; with willingness.

**withers are unwrung, our.** We are neither irritated nor hurt: in allusion to a horse's withers, the highest part of the back, sometimes galled from the saddle.

Let the galled jade wince, *our withers are unwrung*.

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act iii, sc. 2.

**wits about one, to have one's.** To be alert, quick, observing. Originally, *to have one's wits*.

*Ha! let thou thy wits and didst persuade revenge,*

It could not move thus.

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act iv, sc. 5.

*Have you your wits? Know you what 'tis you speak?*

SHAKESPEARE *2 Henry IV* act v, sc. 5

**wit's end, at one's.** At the limit of one's devices and resources; not knowing what to do further.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at *their wit's end*.

*Psalm* cvii, 27.

**wobbly.** [U. S.] A member of the Industrial Workers of the World (I. W. W.).

**wolf from the door, to keep the.** To ward off poverty; to avoid starvation.

**wolf in sheep's clothing.** A dangerous person in harmless guise. See *Matthew* VII, 15.

**wolf, to see a.** To become mute: in allusion to ancient superstition noted in Vergil's *Bucolica*, Eclogue IX, that if a man saw a wolf before the wolf saw him, he thereby lost his voice.

Our young companion has *seen a wolf* . . . and has lost his tongue in consequence.

SCOTT *Quentin Durward* XVIII.

**Wolverine.** [U. S.] A native of Michigan.

**wonder, for a.** Contrary to the expected; strangely.

**woodchuck.** 1. An American burrowing rodent destructive to crops; a marmot. 2. [Eng.] The green woodpecker.

**wooden overcoat.** [U. S.] A coffin.

**wooden spoon.** 1. [U. S. Univ. Cant.] In early days at Yale, the junior having the lowest appointment in his class, and later, the most popular man in his class. 2. [Brit. Univ. Cant.] The last student on the honor list for mathematics at Cambridge.

**wooden wedding.** See under WEDDING.

**wood up.** [U. S.] To take on fuel: in allusion to the use of wood as fuel on early river-steamers.

**wool-gathering, to go.** To indulge in day dreams or idle fancies; to let one's thoughts wander.

His wits were *wool-gathering*, as they say.

BURTON *Anatomy of Melancholy*.

**woolsack.** [Brit.] A cushion stuffed with wool on which the Lord Chancellor sits when presiding in the House of Lords; figuratively, the Lord Chancellor himself.

He [Warren Hastings] was then called to the bar, was informed from the *woolsack* that the Lords had acquitted him, and was solemnly discharged.

MACAULAY *Essays, Warren Hastings*.

**woomera.** [Australian.] The throwing-stick employed by aboriginal spearmen.

The spear is thrown by means of a *wommera*, which is a slight rod, about three feet long, having at one end a niche to receive the end of a spear.

T L MITCHELL *Three Expeditions into the Interior of Eastern Australia* II, 343.

**word** occurs in a number of phrases of idiomatic character.—**at short words.** In brief; briefly.

—**a good word.** A kind or a commendatory report, words of praise.—**hard words.** Anger as indicated by words of indignation or resentment.—**a word and a blow.** Prompt resentment —**a word to the wise is sufficient.** A hint is enough for such as know their best interests —**in a word.** Briefly —**mind the word.** Pay attention to instructions —**to break one's word.** To fail to keep one's promise —**to have a word with.** 1. To talk over or discuss with 2. To have an angry dispute with; quarrel —**to take one at his word.** 1. To understand or to deal with one according to one's own statement 2. To accept as true —**to take the word.** 1. To begin speaking; to take one's turn in the rostrum

The colonel, left alone with his wife for the first time since he had come to town, made haste to take the word

W. D. HOWELLS.

2. To accept as true or sincere

I'll take thy word for faith, not ask thine oath. SHAKESPEARE *Pericles* act i, sc. 2. —**upon my word.** 1. Certainly, absolutely, assuredly; by my troth. 2. I assure you. —**what's the good word?** What have you to say that is cheering or good news?

**words butter no parsnips, fine or soft.** See under BUTTER.

**words of the wise.** Chapters 22, 23, and 24 of the *Book of Proverbs*.

**words will not fill a bushel, many or mere.** Promises will not help the needy.

**work by rack of eye.** [Brit.] To act without rule, be guided by the eye alone.

"The rack o' the eye," by view or sight, without weighing or measuring.

PEGGE *Derbictions*.

**work cut out, to have one's.** To have a task that will fully occupy one's time and require all of one's energy.

**work of or with, to make short.** 1. To put an end to or dispose of, settle in short order. 2. To accomplish speedily.

**work one's will.** To do as one pleases; act according to fancy, pleasure or wish.

**work the dead horse.** Same as FLOG THE DEAD HORSE, see under DEAD and HORSE.

**work the ropes.** To manage or control; without being seen; to pull the wires. See under PULL.

**work up.** 1. To use as material, especially with elaboration. 2. To create by degrees, as a reputation. 3. To excite or rouse, as passion.

He had gone out to India for the purpose of working up certain still obscure problems.

Murray's Magazine 1887

**world and his wife, all the.** Every one; sometimes, all who are socially recognized; also, an ill-assorted multitude of people.

*Miss.* Pray, madam, who were the company?

*Lady S.* Why, there was *all the world and his wife*. SWIFT *Polite Conversations*.

**world, for all the.** 1. Entirely; exactly; precisely. 2. For every consideration.

**world's people.** [U. S.] All persons who are not members of the Society of Friends: so called by the Quakers.

**world, the flesh, and the devil, the.** The collective forces of evil—inordinate love of pleasure, indulgence of carnal appetites, and temptations to evil of every kind—against which Christians must wage perpetual warfare.

Grant that he may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph, against the devil, the world and the flesh. Amen.

*Book of Common Prayer. Public Baptism of Infants.*

**world, to go to the.** To get married.

Everyone goes to the world but I, and I may sit in a corner and cry heigho! for a husband

SHAKESPEARE *Much Ado About Nothing* act ii, sc 1.

**world? What in the.** An interrogative indicating surprize or perplexity; as, *What in the world* led him to do so? Sometimes used with *why*; as, *Why in the world* did you accept?

**world without end.** 1. Unceasingly; without interruption. 2. To all eternity; to the end of time; eternally.

**worm in one's tongue, to have a.** To be ill-natured or spiteful; be cantankerous.

There is one easy artifice

That seldom has been known to miss—

To snarl at all things right or wrong,

Like a mad dog that has a worm in's tongue.

SAMUEL BUTLER *Modern Critics*.

**worm oneself into favor.** To insinuate oneself into the good graces of another as by flattery.

**worm out of.** To obtain by subtlety, as information; as, the reporter *wormed* the story out of the victim.

**worse comes to worst, if.** If things come to a desperate pass; as, *if worse comes to worst* the place can be sold.

"If worse comes to worst" is often rendered meaningless by being changed to "If worst comes to worst." The original and correct form is evident on a moment's thought. It is essentially a continuation of "from bad to worse"—from worse to worst.

ROSSITER JOHNSON *Alphabet of Rhetoric* p. 307

**worse or worser half, the.** The husband contrasted with the wife when she is considered *the better half*.

These fair helpmates are as convivial as their *worser halves*.

HONE *Every-day Book* II, 388

**worst** occurs in certain idiomatic phrases; as, **at the worst**. In the most evil or unfortunate condition, actual or supposable; at the greatest disadvantage, as an antagonist; as, the disease is *at the worst*; to have one *at the worst*. —**the worst way**. To a painful degree; very badly; exceedingly.—**to do one's worst**. To do the greatest harm or injury in one's power; also, to do one's poorest work.—**to get the worst**. To be defeated or be the loser in, as a contest, a bargain, etc.—**to put to the worst**. To inflict defeat upon; conquer.

**worth while.** Advantageous; profitable; worth the time, trouble, effort or inconvenience.

Upon the face of the thing, it looks as if it might be *worth your while*.

Good Words 1887.

**would-be.** I. *a.* Desiring or professing to be; making pretense of being.

II. *n.* One who desires to be, or to be esteemed as, something that he is not.

The *would-be* wags among the boys racked their brains to find the means of tormenting her through her name.

S BARING-GOULD.

**wrack or wreck and ruin.** Complete ruin. Same as RACK AND RUIN.

*Wrackin' and ruinin'* all afore her

MACMANUS *Chimney Corners* 252.

**wrapped up in.** To be involved in; be wholly engrossed with, devoted to, or dependent upon.

**Wrens.** [Brit. Mil. Cant.] The Woman's Royal Naval Service, which vied with the *Waacs* (q. v.) in service during the World War.

**wrinkle.** A smart dodge, new trick, useful hint.—**a wrinkle on one's horn.** A valuable hint

"Now," says the major, "I'll give you, Slick, a new *wrinkle on your horn*"

HALIBURTON *Sam Slick*.

**write like an angel.** To be a master of composition but a poor conversationalist.

Here lies Nolly Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,

Who *wrote like an angel*, but talked like poor Poll.

DAVID GARRICK.

**write up.** 1. To commend to favor in writing; puff. 2. To describe fully in writing; also, to bring up to date.

"Pray, Mr. Grey, is it true that all the houses in Russell Square are *tenantless*?"

"Quite true. A perfect shame, is it not! Let us *write it up*."

BEACONSFIELD *Vivian Grey*.

**write-up.** A laudatory or descriptive article written for the press.

**wrong box, in the.** In a predicament; in a false position; in a dilemma.

"That, I grant you, must be confessed, doctor, I'm afraid we have got into the *wrong box*"

SMOLLETT *Peregrine Pickle* XLIII

**wrong in the upper story.** [Brit.] Demented; insane.

**wrong side, to get out of bed.** To have made a bad beginning of the day; to be in a bad humor. Sometimes rendered *to get out of the wrong side of the bed*.

It was an ancient superstition that it was unlucky to set the left foot on the ground first, getting out of bed. The same superstition applies to putting on the left shoe first, a "fancy" not yet wholly exploded.

BREWER *Phrase and Fable*.

**wrong side of, on the.** Passed: commonly used of age; as, she is *on the wrong side of fifty*.

**wug.** [Anglo-Indian.] Loot, swag, booty.

In one hunt after *wug*, as the Belooches call plunder, 200 of that beautiful regiment, the 2nd Europeans, marched incessantly for 15 hours over such ground as I suppose the world cannot match for ravines, except in places where it is impossible to march at all

SIR CHARLES NAPIER in *Life* III, 298.

# X

**X.** [Brit. Commercial Cant.] A mark placed on beer kegs to indicate that a ten shilling tax has been paid; hence, a beer of a certain grade or quality. Additional cross marks intended to convey that the alcoholic contents has been doubled or tripled are usually misleading.

And I said, "A pint of *double X*, and please to draw it mild!"

BARHAM *Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Xantippe or Xanthippe.** The name of Socrates's wife, proverbial for shrewishness and ill-temper; hence, an ill-tempered woman; a scold; a virago.

Be she as foul as was Florentins' love  
As old as Sybil, and as curst and shrewd  
As Socrates' *Xantippe*, or a worse  
She moves me not

SHAKESPEARE *Taming of the Shrew* act i, sc 3

**Xerxes' tears.** Tears of hypocrisy: from the Persian king who, when he reviewed his army for the invasion of Greece, wept at the thought: "Of all this multitude, who shall say how many will return?"

There was reason for these *Xerxes' tears*.

EMERSON *English Traits* IV.

**Xmas.** Christmas. From the initial letter of the Greek name for Christ — *Χριστός*—plus the English suffix *-mas* from Anglo-Saxon *mæsse*, mass or mass-day.

**X-ray.** Roentgen rays: originally so called by the discoverer because their nature was unknown. Used as a noun, an adjective, or a verb.

Modern medical writers use the term to mean an *X-ray picture*, or an *X-ray examination*, e.g., "an *X-ray* of the stomach showed marked pathology."

WALTER M. BRICKNER, M. D., in *American Journal of Surgery* March, 1921.

# Y

**Yahoo.** A low and vicious person; a degraded brute: from one of a race of human brutes endowed with the most degrading and vicious propensities of man in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. 2. [Southwestern U. S.] A country bumpkin; rustic clown.

**Yank.** A Yankee.

**yank.** To pull, snatch or jerk suddenly; hence, **yanking**, jerking

I canna bide their *yanking* way of knapping English at every word.

SCOTT *St. Ronan's Well* ii.

They were smart enough to see that, while I had no chip on my shoulder, yet I would *yank up* the first man who ventured to neglect the least point of etiquette

R D. EVANS *A Sailor's Log*, 264.

**Yankee.** 1. A person born in New England or descended from New England stock.

Said by some to be the same as Scotch *yankie* and by others to be a form of *Yenghees*, a corruption of French *Anglais* by the Canadian Indians. Spollett used the term in 1762 in his "Adventures of Lancelot Greaves," p. 45: "Proceed . . . without yawing like a Dutch *yanky*." Here the reference may be to a Dutch sailor or sailing vessel. 2. Hence, a citizen of the United States; a foreign, chiefly British, usage. 3. A Northerner; especially, a Federal soldier: so called in the South.

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dictionary*.

When the *Yenghees* arrived at Machtitschwanne, they looked about everywhere for good spots of land.

HECKSWELDER *Indian Nations* III, 77.



**Yankeedom.** 1. The United States of America as a whole. 2. New England; also, the Northern States during the Civil War. 3. Americans collectively or as a class.

**Yankee Doodle.** A national air and song of the United States of America, of uncertain origin, both as to words and music.

By the late Dr Edward Everett Hale the present version was attributed to Edward Bangs, who graduated from Harvard in 1777. Popular theory assigns the authorship to Dr Richard Shuckburgh, an English surgeon and wit, who wrote the verses in 1775 to deride the fantastically unformed Colonial troops. Some writers claim that a similar air was common among the English peasantry prior to Charles I's time.

See *The Musical Reporter*, Boston, May 1841.

In 1905 Dr Wm. H. Grattan Flood, contributed to the *Dolphin*, Philadelphia (vol. iii, p. 187), an interesting article on "The Irish origin of the tune of *Yankee Doodle*." He based his theory solely on the "decidedly Irish" structure of this air and on its similarity to the version of the Irish "All the way to Galway" in a manuscript "dated 1750, the authenticity of which is beyond doubt." In support of Dr. Grattan Flood's theory it may be added that Irish regiments stationed in Galway were actually sent to participate in the war in 1755 and 1757, and that therefore they may have helped to spread this folk-air in America, subsequently known there as *Yankee Doodle*.

O. G. SONNECK in *Grove's Dict. of Music and Musicians*, vol. v, p. 576.

**yap, a.** [Scot.] Quick; apt; eager; bold; also, hungry; with keen appetite.  
**yap, n.** [Eng.] 1. (1) Idle talk; gab. (2) The mouth. (3) A peevish child or its cry; also, a cross, irritable person. (4) A forward, impudent child or mischievous boy; also, a perverse, wilful animal. (5) A simple, unsophisticated rustic; also, a foolish person; one with a weak head. 2. A worthless dog. 3. A yelping bark, as of a dog.

**yap, v.** 1. To bark or yelp, as a dog. 2. [Eng. or Scot.] To talk snapshily or noisily; chatter; scold. 3. [Eng. or Ir.] To cry peevishly, as a child; also, to cheep like a young bird.

**Yard, The.** [Brit.] Scotland Yard. See under SCOTLAND.

**Year of Grace.** A year in the Christian era; also, **Year of Our Lord**, a year dating from the birth of Christ, the English equivalent of *Anno Domini*.

**years of discretion.** 1. The age of discretion. See under AGE. Usually determined by statute in the several States of the American Union and elsewhere. 2. Years of maturity; years at which if normal one is capable of judgment between right and wrong.

If you have occasion to mention me, let it be by Parthemissa, for that's the Name I have assum'd ever since I come to *Years of Discretion*.

STEELE *Tender Husband* act ii, sc. 1.

**yegg, yeggman.** [U. S.] A tramp who makes a business of robbery rather than of begging; a traveling burglar and safe-blower.

When a particularly clever thief is found among a gipsy tribe he is selected as the *yegg* or chief thief. Then came the name of John Yegg, and finally the word *yeggman*.

*The Press* Philadelphia, May 27, 1909.

**yellow-boy.** A gold coin.

The delight of picking up the money—the bright, shining *yellow-boys*.

DICKENS *Old Curiosity Shop* xlii.

**yellow dog.** A cowardly brute.

**yellow-jack.** 1. Yellow fever. 2. The flag displayed for quarantine purposes, both in the United States and Great Britain.

Raymond and all his family died of yellow fever, and Fernando . . . had passed a few weeks recovering from a touch of *Yellow Jack*.

A. C. GUNTER *Baron Montez of Panama* IV, x.

**yellow journalism.** 1. The sensational or muck-raking press: a name earned for it perhaps by the *Yellow Kid* created in cartoon by Richard Outcault in 1896. 2. The recklessly unscrupulous information often without foundation in fact and created for sensational effect, printed by the yellow press.

America remains true to her British friendship, and the stories of American Fenians invading Canada are officially characterised as the latest outbreak of 'yellow journalism' *The Daily Telegraph* London Dec 27, 1899.

**Yellow Peril.** The Mongolian race: so termed in the press after the Russian-Japanese War.

**yeoman's duty or service.** Efficient support or material help in pressing emergency or dire need: in allusion to the efficient service of the yeomen in early English armies.

I once did hold it, as our statists do,  
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much  
How to forget that learning, but, Sir, now  
It did me *yeoman's service*.

SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* act v. sc 11

**Yiddish.** A Middle High German dialect, or number of dialects, spoken by the Jews, containing a large number of Germanized Hebrew words and using Hebrew characters for its literature. It contains about 70 per cent. of German, 20 per cent. of Hebrew, and 10 per cent. of Slavic words, and is used as a polyglot jargon for intercommunication by Jews from different nations.—FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard Dict.*

**Yorkshire** occurs in a number of idiomatic phrases, besides being used to designate the name of the English county and certain products made therein, as *Yorkshire cement, drab, machine, pudding*, etc. It is used to designate cajolery; blarney; sharp practise; trickery, and any attempt to deceive or swindle another is so called; as, "None of your *Yorkshire* now!"—**to come Yorkshire over one.** To succeed in securing the advantage over in a transaction: said to be traced to sharp practise in horse-trading.—**Yorkshire bite.** [Brit.] An over-reaching action; a bad bargain into which one has been artfully entrapped.

I flatter myself that this will turn out to be a *Yorkshire bite*, and that the biter will be bit.

*Gentleman's Magazine* August 6 20/1

—**Yorkshire compliment.** [Brit.] Something of no value either to the giver or the receiver.—**Yorkshire light.** A sliding sash that enables one to admit light or exclude it at will.—**Yorkshire treat or reckoning.** A treat, where every one pays his own score.

**you all.** [Southern U. S.] A phrase connoting second person plural of the personal pronoun *you*: a form used repeatedly by Shakespeare.

"I see *you all* are bent to set against me your merriment"

*Midsommer Night's Dream*, act iii, scene 2.

"*You all* did see, that on the Lupercal  
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,  
Which he did thrice refuse.

*You all* did love him once, not without cause.

If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.

*You all* do know this mantle!

*Julius Caesar*, act iii, scene 2.

That *you all* is employed by Americans of the Southern States in addressing a single person is too absurd to deserve refutation. *Louisville-Courier-Journal* Sept. 28, 1922.

Some mistaken critics in the North and West imagine that the people of the South use the expression, *you-all*, with reference to one person. It is possible that the expression may be used in mountain districts somewhere in the South, tho we have

never heard it; but it is certain that educated Southerners, most of whom use the expression habitually, always have more than one person in mind.

THE LEXICOGRAPHER in *The Literary Digest*, June 25, 1921, p. 70. Joel Chandler Harris, Thomas Nelson Page, and other Southern writers, proficient in the use of Southern dialect, have said that they never heard or knew of the use of *you all* in the singular number. It is an illusion, or manner of speech, that Northern listeners don't wholly take in that makes them believe otherwise. *You all* is the Southern plural for *you*. Those of the mountains say *you'uns*, that is, *you ones*, for the same purpose. *The Nashville Banner* July 24, 1921, p. 4.

**you've got some crust.** You have some nerve; you are fresh, forward, or meddlesome.

**you've got to show me.** See under MISSOURI, p. 279.

**yukked.** [Eng.] Cleaned; dredged; drained: said of ditches and dikes. He had acres of potatoes under water, all because the authorities had not seen that the dykes had been *yukked* out. *The Yorkshire Evening Post* Leeds, Oct. 13, 1903, p. 4.

**Yule.** Christmas or the festivities connected with it: a period of joy and revelry, "Peace on earth and good-will to men." So called from Old English *geol*, the name for Christmastide.—**Yule candle.** A large candle formerly used to light the festivities of Christmas eve. It was an evil omen for the candle to burn out before the evening was at an end. Any remnants were kept to be used at the celebrator's funeral obsequies.—**Yule day.** (Prov. Eng. or Scot.) Christmas day.—**Yule log, clog, or block.** A large log or block of wood formerly burned on Christmas eve. It was brought into the room and put in place on the hearth with much ceremony.

The *Yule clog* is still burnt in many farmhouses and kitchens in England.

IRVING *Sketch-Book* p. 247, note.

## Z

**Zabernism.** Military arrogance and despotism as reflected by an attack by a German subaltern on a lame cobbler in Zabern (modern *Saverne*), Alsace, in 1912.

**zebrass.** [U. S.] A hybrid offspring of a zebra sire and a burro dam: first obtained by an experiment of the United States Department of Animal Industry, at Bethesda, Md., in 1909.

**zebrinny.** [U. S.] A hybrid between a female zebra and a stallion.

**zebrule.** [U. S.] A hybrid between the male zebra and the mare.

**zero-hour.** The time for action: from the military practise of using the term during the World War to designate the moment of attack.

We reached the front at 11 p. m. and not until our arrival there were we informed of the *zero-hour*—the time when the attack was to be made. The hour of 12 10 had been selected.

ALEX. MCCLINTOCK *Best o' Luck*.

Meanwhile, our infantry, with every man ready and alert, waited for the signal of *Zero Hour*, at 6.30 a. m., to spring forth from the "jump off" trenches. Promptly at the hour, the bombardment ceased, being suddenly converted into a barrage . . . with our assaulting troops . . . behind it.

COLONELS J. A. MOSS and H. S. HOWLAND, *America in Battle*, p. 5.

**Zolaesque.** Characterized by the naturalism of the French novelist Emile Zola's writings, and implying frank realism and unblushing detail.

**zounds!** A euphemism for "By God's wounds!" used as an asseveration or positive declaration of a fact referred to.

*Zounds*, I love you, and that's the truth.

LYTTON *Lucretia* I, i.

**Zulu.** [Eng.] 1. An artificial fly used in angling. 2. A cheap hat of plaited rushes. 3. One of a tribe of South African natives belonging to the Bantu family; also, the language spoken by them.

**Zu-Zu.** [Fr. & Am. Milit. Cant.] The Zouaves, a corps of light infantry in the French army: so called from *Zwawa*, an Algerian tribe of Kabyles, from which they were originally recruited by the French, and whose uniform was imitated by the Zouave corps of the Federal troops in the American Civil War.

**zaggered.** Bluffed; blustered; talked out of; swaggered.

Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor vok pass. An chu'd ha' been *zagger'd* out of my life, 'twould not ha' been zo long as 'tis by a vortnight

SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* act iv, sc 6

**zwieback.** Baked twice: a German word used commonly in the United States to designate a dough of wheaten bread, or a rusk, baked slowly in the loaf until it acquires a uniform light yellow color, then sliced and toasted.

**zyve.** [Local, Eng.] A scythe. See quotation.

Ef you do ax vor sturdy men  
Wi' *zyve* or plough, vor sword or pen,—  
Go to the West, vor there, I'll bet,  
You'll vind 'em down in Zomerset.

*Zomerset.*

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